

A BOUQUET  
FROM FRANCE

ONE HUNDRED FRENCH POEMS  
WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS  
IN VERSE AND BRIEF NOTES

*by*

WILFRID THORLEY



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY  
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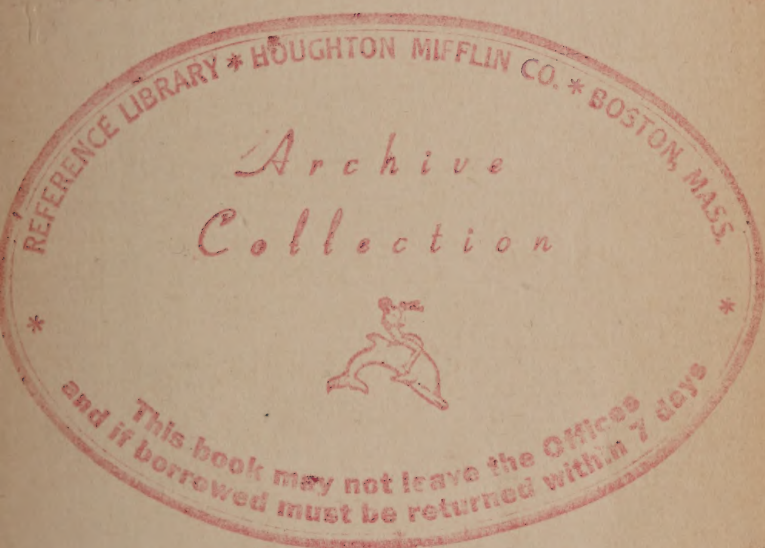
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WILFRID THORLEY

*author of*

"Confessional and other Poems"

"Paul Verlaine" ~ "Fleur-de-Lys"

"The Londoner's Chariot and other Poems"

*&c.*

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY  
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◇   ◇   P R E F A C E   ◇   ◇

A HUNDRED years ago British belittling of all things French (the mere vent for our hatred of Bonaparte) was just as vocal among frequenters of the literary *salon* as among the followers of the cockpit and the ring. Landor and De Quincey were denouncers hardly more polite than these vociferous layers of odds, while their competence for judgment was even less qualified by knowledge when it was the French poets whom they butchered to make a British holiday. But our slighting of French poetry was of older date than this, and it had at that time a better reason; for it may be said that the type of poetry which produced the dry polish of our one urbane century (the eighteenth) had persisted with the French throughout three, until the strait-jacket of the classic tradition had turned the poet from being a child of Nature into a mannequin of severe and unnatural attitudes and a speech that sounded with the monotonous click of its clockwork mechanism. We did not and we do not understand the social complex of which Corneille and Racine are the flower; it may be because, while Shakespeare gave us the humanity that we know, Corneille and Racine gave us the "gentlemanity" of a world unknown to us. And if the folk-songs of the older France had ever crossed the Channel it had been on lips and not in books; and the soldiery that sang them over pots of ale on the tavern bench had not been invited to leave their cards on our leaders of light and learning. The radiance of the *Pléiade*, which had proved so penetrating to the Elizabethans, was temporarily hidden under a bushel of neglect,

and the drums of the insurgent army were not yet audible on the highways of French literature. In the vanguard of these belated liberators strode Victor Hugo, who was the first to thrust

un bonnet rouge au vieux dictionnaire.

And yet, though they had thrown away the wig, the powder, and the patch, they still clung to the old bravery of gold braid and crimson plume, and it is only the poetical grandchildren of the slightly strident Père Hugo who have dared to appear before us in homespun and corduroys. Reaction from the emotional abandon and lax rhythm of the Romantics came with the school of Parnasse, whose yoke of strictest form their followers have in turn cast off.

I hope that something of all this may be seen in the procession about to begin; but it must rightly be assumed that the translator has studied what he most affects, and, being master of these ceremonies, has given most of the stage to the performers whom he best enjoys or from whose speeches an English poem might be most easily derived.

The appearance of the original French opposite to my renderings relieves me of the necessity of making too precise and too frequent explanations of how I have deviated from it. In translating the French poets I have tried to follow the example of André Chénier in regard to the Greek, when he made his claim to

Faire, en s'éloignant d'eux avec un soin jaloux  
Ce qu'eux-mêmes ils feraient, s'ils vivaient parmi nous.

In other words, original poems should in their renderings sound like originals, or the translator has failed.

If sometimes I have said not what the French poets would have said had they been one of ourselves, but rather what *myself* would now say, I would plead that even this daring is better than, by a literal and vain fidelity, the saying of something in a manner which no poet would assume. There are times when, in order to gain the poet's effect, I have frankly translated his words by equivalents of sound rather than of sense, and I hope it may be found that I have not abused the licence so taken.

Certain of the versions are reprinted from the *Academy*, *Bookman's Journal*, *Cambridge Magazine*, *Clarion*, *Country Life*, *G.K.'s Weekly*, *Home-reading Magazine*, *Life and Letters*, *New Age*, *New Leader*, *New Witness*, and *Teacher's World*.

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W. T.



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# Part One



◇ TO ARTHUR QUAYLE ◇

*L*ONG years ago when I, a fool unthrifty,  
Wandered in France, I made my fingers bleed,  
A-gathering sweet flowers. Here are fifty  
Regrown from their old seed.

*Not all my chosen have a honeyed savour  
Nor give sweet odour, though a many do :  
The Muse of Gallic poets wears for favour  
A bitter herb or two.*

*The spiny clusters pricked me in my thieving,  
Some buds I spoiled in binding my bouquet,  
And what was lovely once beyond believing  
You cannot see to-day.*

*The hue is gone from many a one here rendered,  
Their perfume dwindles upon English air ;  
Remember, if you can, the many-splendoured  
Wild flowers once they were.*

**E**N un vergier, sotz fuelha d'albespi,  
Tenc la dompna son amic costa si  
Tro la gayta crida que l'alba vi.  
Oy dieus ! oy dieus ! de l'alba tan tost ve !

Plagues a dieu ja la nueitz non falhis,  
Ni'l mieus amicx lonc de mi nos partis,  
Ni la gayta jorn ni alba no vis.  
Oy dieus ! oy dieus ! de l'alba tan tost ve !

Bel dous amicx, baizem nos ieu e vos  
Aval els pratz on chanto 'ls auzellos,  
Tot o fassam en despieg del gilos.  
Oy dieus ! oy dieus ! de l'alba tan tost ve !

Bel dous amicx, fassam un joc novel  
Ins el jardi on chanton li auzel, ,  
Tro la gayta toque son caramel.  
Oy dieus ! oy dieus ! de l'alba tan tost ve !

Per la doss' aura qu'es venguda de lay  
Del mieu amic belh e cortes e gay,  
Del sieu alen ai begut un dous ray.  
Oy dieus ! oy dieus ! de l'alba tan tost ve !

La dompna es agradans e plazens ;  
Per sa beutat la gardon mantas gens,  
Et a son cor en amar leyalmens.  
Oy dieus ! oy dieus ! de l'alba tan tost ve !

*Anonyme (xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle)*

WITHIN an orchard, under the white bloom,  
Two lovers clasp through all the night's long  
gloom,

Until the watch cry out, " The night is done ! "

Ah, God! Ah, God! how soon the dawn is here!

Would God there came no ending to the night  
To wake and break sweet lovers from delight !

Would that the watch were blind unto the sun !

Ah, God! Ah, God! how soon the dawn is here!

Belovèd, beat me downward with thy rain  
Of kisses while I kiss thee back again.

We will be loving though the world be loth !

Ah, God! Ah, God! how soon the dawn is here!

Oh, fondle me, belovèd, and be proud  
Within this garden where the birds are loud,  
Until the watch cry out upon our sloth.

Ah, God! Ah, God! how soon the dawn is here!

Sweet on thy lips is the warm April air,  
And sweet the draft of thy wild kisses there.

I drink the flood of them, a drownèd weed.

Ah, God! Ah, God! how soon the dawn is here!

Now cleave again ! though many in the land  
Would smite thee down and give a good right hand  
To lie awhile where now thy lips do feed.

Ah, God! Ah, God! how soon the dawn is here!



NE quier veoir Medée ne Jason,  
 Ne trop avant lire ens on mapemonde,  
 Ne la musique Orpheüs ne le son,  
 Ne Herculês, qui cercha tout le monde,  
 Ne Lucesse, qui tant fu bonne et monde,  
 Ne Penelope aussi, car, par saint Jame,  
 Je voi assés, puisque je voi ma dame.

Ne quier veoir Vergile ne Caton,  
 Ne par quel art orent si grant faconde,  
 Ne Leander, qui tout sans naviron  
 Nooit en mer, qui rade est et parfonde,  
 Tout pour l'amour de sa dame la blonde,  
 Ne nuls rubis, sapphir, perle ne j'ame :  
 Je voi assés, puisque je voi ma dame.

Ne quier veoir le cheval Pegason,  
 Qui plus tost court en l'air ne vole aronde,  
 Ne l'image que fist Pymalion,  
 Qui n'ot pareil première ne seconde,  
 Ne Oleüs, qui en mer boute l'onde ;  
 S'on voet sçavoir pour quoi? Pour ce, par  
 m'ame :  
 Je voi assés, puisque je voi ma dame.

JEHAN FROISSART

NOT Jason nor Medèa were a boon  
 Unto these eyes, nor charts of all the seas  
 A solace to me, nor sweet Orpheus' tune,  
 Nor sight of the world-travell'd Hercules,  
 Nor rudely used Lucretia. None of these  
 Do I desire, since I have nought to get  
 Whose eyes upon my Lady's self are set.

Nor yet with the great Virgil would I haunt  
 The shadows, gravely pondering, nor be found  
 With him whom the deep waters could not daunt,  
 The fond Leander, whom the sundering sound  
 Kept not from his fair love ; no ruby round  
 Nor pearl I covet, who have nought to get  
 Whose eyes upon my Lady's self are set.

Not sight of Pegasus could draw me on,  
 Whose wings sped swifter than an arrow shot,  
 Nor yet that statue of Pygmalion  
 Whose magic made the marble limbs grow hot ;  
 Nor would I seek Olèus, who once got  
 The sea to drink, since I have nought to get  
 Whose eyes upon my Lady's self are set.

ON dist que j'ai bien manière  
 D'estre orgillousette ;  
 Bien afiert à estre fière  
 Jone pucelette.

Hui main matin me levai  
 Droit à l'ajournée ;  
 En un jardinet entrai  
 Dessus la rousée ;

Je cuidai estre première  
 Ou clos sus l'erbette,  
 Mès mon doulc ami y ere,  
 Cœillans la flourette.

On dist que j'ai bien manière,  
 D'estre orgillousette ;  
 Bien afiert à estre fière  
 Jone pucelette.

Un chapelet li donnai  
 Fait de la vesprée ;  
 Il le prist, bon gré l'en sçai ;  
 Puis m'a appelée :

“ Vœilliés oïr ma proière,  
 Très belle et doucette,  
 Un petit plus que n'affière  
 Vous m'estes durette.”

On dist que j'ai bien manière,  
 D'estre orgillousette ;  
 Bien afiert à estre fière  
 Jone pucelette.

JEHAN FROISSART

THEY say I move too haughtilye  
 And mar thereby my grace ;  
 A littel maid looks naughtilye  
 That hath not a proud face.

This morning when the dawne was dim  
 I rose and wandered through  
 The garden where the lawne was dim  
 With littel drops of dew.

And I who in that garden there  
 Had thought alone to be,  
 Did finde my lad was warden there  
 A-cullynge flowers for me.

They say I move too haughtilye  
 And mar thereby my grace ;  
 A littel maid looks naughtilye  
 That hath not a proud face.

Thereon unto my lad I gave  
 A chaplet I had twined  
 But yester-eve ; right glad I gave,  
 And he to take soe kinde.

Then spake he : “ Sweet, that will noe hurt  
 To any, hear my plea :  
 I that for thee am ill knowe hurt  
 From thy harsh looks on me.”

They say I move too haughtilye  
 And mar thereby my grace ;  
 A littel maid looks naughtilye  
 That hath not a proud face.

SUI je, sui je, sui je belle ?

Il me semble, à mon avis,  
Que j'ay beau front et doulz viz  
Et la bouche vermeillette ;  
Dittes moy se je suis belle.

J'ay vers yeulx, petits sourcis,  
Le chief blond, le nez traitis,  
Ront menton, blanche gorgette ;  
Sui je, sui je, sui je belle ?

J'ay piez rondès et petiz,  
Bien chaussans, et biaux habis,  
Je sui gaye et foliette ;  
Dittes moy se je sui belle.

J'ay draps de soye et tabis,  
J'ay draps d'or et blans et bis,  
J'ay mainte bonne chosette ;  
Dittes moy se je sui belle.

Que .xv. ans n'ay, je vous dis ;  
Moult est mes tresors jolys,  
S'en garderay la clavette ;  
Sui je, sui je, sui je belle ?

Bien devra estre hardis  
Cilz qui sera mes amis,  
Qui ara tel damoiselle ;  
Dittes moy se je sui belle.



AM I, am I beautiful ?

In good sooth it seems to me  
Fair of brow and face I be,  
And my lips a red delight ;  
Tell me I am beautiful.

Eyes of green and slender brows,  
Golden hair and straight slim nose,  
Rounded chin and throat of white ;  
Am I, am I beautiful ?

I have tiny feet well shapèd,  
Fitly shod am I and drapèd,  
Gay, and eager for all bliss ;  
Tell me I am beautiful.

I have satin robes and silk,  
Others gold or white as milk,  
And a many more, I wis ;  
Tell me I am beautiful.

Faith ! I have but fifteen year ;  
Many treasures the most dear  
Under lock are shutten still ;  
Am I, am I beautiful ?

Strong must be the man and bold  
Who in loving bond will hold  
Such a maiden to his will ;  
Tell me I am beautiful.

Et par Dieu je li plevis  
Que tresloyal, se je vis,  
Li seray, si ne chancelle ;  
Sui je, sui je, sui je belle ?

Se courtois est et gentilz,  
Vaillans, apers, bien apriés,  
Il gaignera sa querelle ;  
Dittes moy se je sui belle.

C'est un mondains paradiz  
Que d'avoir dame toudis,  
Ainsi fresche, ainsi nouvelle ;  
Sui je, sui je, sui je belle ?

Entre vous accouardiz,  
Pensez a ce que je diz ;  
Cy fine ma chansonelle ;  
Sui je, sui je, sui je belle ?

EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS

And, by God, I'll pledge as wife  
To be loyal all my life,  
Bounden to him duteously ;  
Am I, am I beautiful ?

If he courteous be and kind,  
Valiant, frank, of learnèd mind,  
Swiftly shall he win from me ;  
Tell me I am beautiful.

'Tis a heaven in this life  
To win such a one for wife,  
Frank and fresh and still to spend ;  
Am I, am I beautiful ?

Listeners, on what I tell  
Think awhile, and so farewell !  
Here my little song hath end ;  
Am I, am I beautiful ?

## ◇ ◇ LE JARDIN ◇ ◇

L'AMOUR de moi sy est enclose  
 Dedans un joly jardinet  
 Ou croist la rose et le muguet  
 Et aussi fait la passeroise.

Ce jardin est bel et plaisant ;  
 Il est garny de toutes flours ;  
 On y prend son esbatement  
 Autant la nuit comme le jour.

Hélas ! il n'est si douce chose  
 Que de ce doulx roussignollet  
 Qui chante au soir, au matinet :  
 Quant il est las il se repose.

Je la vy l'autre jour cueillir  
 La violette en ung vert pré,  
 La plus bellé qu'oncques je veïs  
 Et la plus plaisante à mon gré.

Je la regardé une pose :  
 Elle estoit blanche comme let,  
 Et douce comme un aignelet,  
 Vermeilette comme une rose.

*Anonyme (xv<sup>e</sup> siècle)*

## ◇ ◇ THE GARDEN ◇ ◇

MY love hath hid herself from me  
 Within her littel garden close.  
 The mallow and the rosemarye  
 Growe there besyde the brier-rose.  
*(O Love, be kind ere summer goes!)*

Fayre is that garden to the sight,  
 All flowers there doe sweetly showe ;  
 A man might gladden day and night  
 Therein and never wysh to goe.  
*(Alas, that I should love her soe!)*

Ah, me ! no sweeter voice there is  
 For singyng than the nightingale's  
 At eve or when the morning pales :  
 When he is weary he doth cease.  
*(Thy lover onely hath noe peace!)*

I saw her gather, hand in dew,  
 A violet from out the grass,  
 The loveliest that ever grewe,  
 The sweetest one that ever was.  
*(And she ungatherèd, alas!)*

I see her there, and white she showes  
 As milk and soft as lambèkyn,  
 Nor not soe white when I looke in,  
 But red as anye littel rose.  
*(O Love, be kind ere summer goes!)*

BALLADE DE BONNE DOCTRINE  
 ~ À CEUX DE MAUVAISE VIE ~

**C**AR ou soies porteur de bulles,  
 Pipeur ou hasardeur de dez,  
 Tailleur de faulx coings, tu te brusles,  
 Comme ceulx qui sont eschaudez,  
 Traistres parjurs, de foy vuydez ;  
 Soies larron, ravis ou pillés :  
 Où en va l'acquest, que cuidez ?  
 Tout aux tavernes et aux filles.

Ryme, raille, cymballe, luttés,  
 Comme fol, faintif, eshontez ;  
 Farce, broulle, joue des fleustes ;  
 Fais, es villes et es citez,  
 Farces, jeux et moralitez ;  
 Gaigne au berlanc, au glic, aux  
 quilles.

Aussi bien va—or escoutez—  
 Tout aux tavernes et aux filles.

De telz ordures te reculles ;  
 Laboure, fauche champs et prez ;  
 Sers et pense chevaulx et mulles ;  
 S'aucunement tu n'es lettrez ;  
 Assez auras, se prens en grez.  
 Mais se chanvre broyes ou tilles,  
 Ne tens ton labour qu'as ouvrez  
 Tout aux tavernes et aux filles.

VI

BALLADE OF GOOD ADVICE  
 ◇   ◇   TO ROGUES   ◇   ◇

DO you play the pardoner, do you throw  
 A dice that's loaded or darkly pore  
 To make flash money? You'll burn, I trowe,  
 As sure as a damn'd conspirator.  
 On foggy nights by the tavern door  
 Do you feel for a purse or a throat to slit?  
 What are you filling your wallet for?  
 Wine and the women take all of it.

Is it lute or flute or the fiddle-bow  
 You ply for money, or do you score  
 From gaping burghers with eyes too slow  
 To follow the feint of a conjurer?  
 Do you mime a tale out of Bible-lore?  
 With a five-aced pack do you make your bit?  
 It'll all go too as it went before—  
 Wine and the women take all of it.

What's ill-gotten will bring you woe,  
 'Twill find you merry and leave you sore:  
 Then turn your hand to a steadfast plowe,  
 Burn your books on the threshing-floor:  
 Thus at ease in your bed you'll snore.  
 But if from labour you up and quit,  
 You're a fool more damn'd than you were  
 before—  
 Wine and the women take all of it.



ENVOI

Chausses, pourpains esguilletez,  
Robes, et toutes voz drappilles,  
Ains que vous fassiez pis, portez  
Tout aux tavernes et aux filles.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

ENVOI

The gaudy raiment that once you wore,  
Your robes of satin, your hosen knit,  
It'll go again as it went before—  
Wine and the women take all of it.

REPOS eternal, donne à cil,  
 Sire, et clarté perpetuelle,  
 Qui vaillant plat ni escuelle  
 N'eut oncques, n'ung brain de percil.  
 Il fut rez, chief, barbe et sourcil,  
 Comme ung navet qu'on ret ou pelle.

Repos eternal donne à cil.

Rigueur le transmit en exil,  
 Et luy frappa au cul la pelle,  
 Non obstant qu'il dit : " J'en appelle ! "  
 Qui n'est pas terme trop subtil.

Repos eternal donne à cil.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

VII

◇ ◇ RONDEAU ◇ ◇

ETERNAL rest, O Lord, be his,  
 And Thy perpetual glory shed  
 On him that ever lacked for bread  
 And drink to heal his miseries.  
 Shorn was his pate as smooth as is  
 A turnip that is scraped and shred.  
 Eternal rest, O Lord, be his.  
 Outcast he was for villanies  
 And smitten hard, although he said,  
 "I do appeal!" and thereby pled  
 In words that are full plain, I wis :  
 Eternal rest, O Lord, be his.

MORT, j'appelle de ta rigueur,  
 Qui m'a ma maistresse ravie,  
 Et n'es pas encore assouvie,  
 Se tu ne me tiens en langueur.  
 Onc puis n'eus force ne vigueur ;  
 Mais que te nuysoit elle en vie,  
 Mort ?

Deux estions, et n'avions qu'ung cuer ;  
 S'il est mort, force est que devie,  
 Voire, ou que je vive sans vie,  
 Comme les images, par cuer,  
 Mort !

FRANÇOIS VILLON

## VIII

## ◇   ◇   R O N D E A U   ◇   ◇

**D**EATH, I cry out on your harsh ire  
That late my lovely Lady slew,  
And still unsated doth pursue  
Me with a grief of heart most dire.  
Now sick in mind and limb I tire ;  
What evil hath she done to you,  
Death ?  
Twain, in our hearts there burnt one fire ;  
And she being dead, I have no clue  
To life unless it wear the hue  
Of the cold statues in the choir,  
Death !

## ◇ GRANT TESTAMENT ◇

PREMIER, je donne ma povre ame  
 A la benoïste Trinité,  
 Et la commande à Nostre Dame,  
 Chambre de la divinité ;  
 Priant toute la charité  
 Des dignes neuf Ordres des cieulx,  
 Que par eulx soit ce don porté  
 Devant le Trosne precieux.

Item, mon corps je donne et laisse  
 A nostre grant mere la terre ;  
 Les vers n'y trouveront grant gresse :  
 Trop luy a fait fain dure guerre.  
 Or luy soit delivré grant erre :  
 De terre vint, en terre tourne.  
 Toute chose, se par trop n'erre,  
 Voulentiers en son lieu retourne.

Item, et à mon plus que pere  
 Maistre Guillaume de Villon  
 Qui esté m'a plus doulx que mere :  
 Enfant eslevé de maillon,  
 Degeté m'a de maint boullon,  
 Et de cestuy pas ne s'esioye,  
 Si luy requiers à genoullon,  
 Qu'il n'en laisse toute la joye.

Je luy donne ma librairie,  
 Et le *Rommant du Pet au Deable*,  
 Lequel Maistre Guy Tabarie  
 Grossa qui est homs veritable.



## LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

UNTO the Trinity my soul  
 I do bequeathe, and pray for it  
 The help of Her to make it whole  
     Who is with endless glory lit,  
     Thereby desiring of the fit  
 Nine orders of the heavenly stair  
     To bear it upward as they flit  
 Unto God's throne and leave it there.

I give my body shrunk and lean  
     To grandam earth. The worms shall lack  
 All food thereon save what hath been  
     Long stretchèd on hard hunger's rack.  
     Then let it straight be given back,  
 And earth that gave receive the same :  
     Unless I stumble on the track,  
 All things go gladly whence they came.

To Master William, more to me  
     Than any father ever known,  
 Who nourished me more tenderly  
     Then ever mother hath her own—  
     Ah, me ! the wild oats I have sown !  
 How oft he saved me ! Do not fret,  
     Good father, after I am gone,  
 But follow God and me forget !—

To him I do bequeathe my few  
     Well-bounden books, and therewithal  
 One writ by Tabarie, that knew  
     How to indite in good round scrawl.

Par cayers est soubz une table.  
Combien qu'il soit rudement fait,  
La matiere est si tres notable,  
Qu'elle amende tout le mesfait.

Item, donne à ma povre mere  
Pour saluer nostre Maistresse,  
Qui pour moy ot douleur amere,  
Dieu le scet, et mainte tristesse ;  
Autre chastel n'ay, ne fortresse,  
Où me retraye corps et ame,  
Quand sur moy court malle destresse,  
Ne ma mere, la povre femme.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

Under a bench its leaves lie all  
In quires. Although 'tis poorly writ,  
The matter's good and maketh small  
The fault of the rude style of it.

To my poor mother I bequeathe  
These ballad verses that she may  
Plead with Our Lady. While I breathe,  
God knows ! she hath but woe alway.  
The only castle on my way  
Where I my stricken soul may hide  
Is that God rears for them that pray,  
And she, poor soul, hath none beside.

QUI voudra voir comme un Dieu me surmonte,  
 Comme il m'assaut, comme il se fait vainqueur,  
 Comme il r'enflame et r'englace mon cœur,  
 Comme il reçoit un honneur de ma honte :

Qui voudra voir une jeunesse pronte,  
 A suivre en vain l'objet de son malheur,  
 Me vienne voir, il verra ma douleur,  
 Et la rigueur de l'archer qui me donte.

Il cognoistra combien la raison peut  
 Contre son arc, quand une fois il veut  
 Que notre cœur son esclave demeure,

Et si verra que je suis trop heureux  
 D'avoir au flanc l'aiguillon amoureux,  
 Plein du venin dont il faut que je meure.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

**W**HOSO would see how by a God cast down  
 I am assailèd and do fear his ire,  
 How he doth fill my heart with frost or fire,  
 How my poor shame doth feed his great renown ;  
 Whoso would see too willing youth o'erthrown  
 In fond pursuit of his so vain desire,  
 Let him behold me and my sorrow dire  
 Wherein that Archer's ruthlessness is shown.

Then may he tell there is no human care  
 Can foil his bowshot when the boy doth swear  
 The feeble heart shall be bond-slave to Love ;  
 Then may he see my own too happy pride  
 To have his bitter arrow in my side,  
 So full of venom that I die thereof.

**A**MOUR me tue, et si je ne veux dire  
Le plaisant mal que ce m'est de mourir,  
Tant j'ay grand peur qu'on vueille secourir  
Ce doux torment pour lequel je souspire.

Il est bien vray que ma langueur desire  
Qu'avec le temps je me puisse guerir :  
Mais je ne veux ma dame requerir  
Pour ma santé, tant me plaist mon martyre.

Tais-toy langueur, je sen venir le jour,  
Que ma maistresse après si long sejour,  
Voyant le mal que son orgueil me donne,

A la douceur la rigueur fera lieu,  
En imitant la nature de Dieu,  
Qui nous chastie, et puis il nous pardonne.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

I AM slain by Love, yet will I never tell  
 How sweet a burden I doe bear in death,  
 Lest one well-willing and too pitiable  
 Should ease the wound that robs me of my  
 breath.

Though my so feeble heart desires in truth  
 To find in time its healing, I'll be dumb  
 Nor seek my ladye's pity lest her ruth  
 Should mar the pleasure of my martyrdom.  
 Be staunch, faint heart, the daye is but delayed  
 Whereon my ladye's long sustainèd pride  
 Shall turne to pity of the wound it made,  
 And yield the tenderness too long denied,  
 Even as God who chastens Hys belovèd  
 And after pardons whom He hath reprovèd.



QUAND je te voy seule assise à par-toy,  
 Toute amusée avecques ta pensée,  
 Un peu la teste encontre bas baissée,  
 Te retirant du vulgaire et de moy :

Je veux souvent pour rompre ton esmoy,  
 Te saluer, mais ma voix offensée,  
 De trop de peur se retient amassée  
 Dedans la bouche, et me laisse tout coy.

Souffrir ne puis les rayons de ta veuë :  
 Craintive au corps, mon ame tremble esmeuë :  
 Langue ne voix ne font leur action :

Seuls mes soupairs, seul mon triste visage  
 Parlent pour moy, et telle passion  
 De mon amour donne assez tesmoignage.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

**W**HEN all alone I doe behold thee seated  
 And happy with thine own thoughts privatelye,  
 Thy dear head drooping and thyself retreated  
 From the loud world and from thys worthless me,  
 I am fain to draw thee from thy gentle musing  
 And give thee greeting, but so greatly dread  
 That my voice, muted by my mouth's refusing,  
 Withholds the words I had most dearly said.  
 I cannot bear thy light that overpowers,  
 I have not speech nor anye utterance  
 Since my weak soul within my body cowers :  
 Only my sighs and my sad countenance  
 Doe bear true witness in their poor dumb fashion,  
 Of how I love thee and with how great passion.

SI mille œillets, si mille liz j'embrasse,  
 Entortillant mes bras tout à l'entour,  
 Plus fort qu'un cep, qui d'un amoureux tour  
 La branche aimée, en mille plis enlasse :

Si le soucy ne jaunist plus ma face,  
 Si le plaisir fait en moy son sejour,  
 Si j'aime mieux les ombres que le jour,  
 Songe divin, ce bien vient de ta grace.

Suyvant ton vol je volerois aux cieux :  
 Mais son portrait qui me trompe les yeux,  
 Fraude tousjours ma joye entre-rompue.

Puis tu me fuis au milieu de mon bien,  
 Comme un éclair qui se finist en rien,  
 Ou comme au vent s'évanouyt la nuë.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

**I**F I embrace a thousand buds and holde  
 A thousand lilies with a grip as fell  
 As anye ivy that with amorous folde  
     Round its loved bole makes loops innumerable ;  
 If care no longer makes my visage grieve,  
     If pleasure now within me hath a place,  
 If more than sunlight I doe love dark eve,  
     O dream divine, this comyth of thy grace.  
 I fly to heaven as I follow thee ;  
     Thys image that before my gaze doth flit  
 Still foils joy's grasp, a thing most shadowye,  
     And I am cheated by the show of it,  
 Even as lightning that leaves nought behind,  
 Or clouds that wane upon the gusty wynd.

FRANC de raison, esclave de fureur,  
 Je vay chassant une Fere sauvage,  
 Or' sur un mont, or' le long d'un rivage,  
 Or' dans le bois de jeunesse et d'erreur.

J'ay pour ma lesse un long trait de malheur,  
 J'ay pour limier un violent courage :  
 J'ay pour mes chiens l'ardeur et le jeune âge,  
 J'ay pour piqueurs l'espoir et la douleur.

Mais eux, voyans que plus elle est chassée,  
 Loin, loin, devant plus s'enfuit élancée,  
 Tournant sur moi leur rigoureux effort,

Comme mastins affamés de repaistre,  
 A longs morceaux se paissent de leur maistre,  
 Et sans mercy me traînent à la mort.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

BEREFT of reason and of rage the thrall,  
 I hunt a wanton fairy that goes speeding  
 By mountain heights or where the waters fall,  
 Through youth's dim forest and by paths mis-  
 leading.

My own misfortune is my leash, alack !

My courage scents the lair of the sweet hider,  
 Ardour and youth are hounds of my hot pack,  
 And hope and grief each serve as my outrider.  
 But these, beholding their own Lord outsped

By the swift sprite that leapeth from hys path,  
 Will hunt no more ; like mongrels long unfed

They turn upon me all their wasted wrath,  
 And rend me limb from limb with savage breath,  
 And drag their master downe unto hys death.

**F**AY rafraîchir mon vin de sorte  
 Qu'il passe en froideur un glaçon :  
 Fay venir Janne, qu'elle apporte  
 Son luth pour dire une chanson :  
 Nous ballerons tous trois au son :  
 Et dy à Barbe qu'elle vienne  
 Les cheveux tors à la façon  
 D'une follastre Italienne.  
 Ne vois tu que le jour se passe ?  
 Je ne vy point au lendemain :  
 Page, reverse dans ma tasse,  
 Que ce grand verre soit tout plain.  
 Maudit soit qui languit en vain :  
 Ces vieux Medecins je n'approuve :  
 Mon cerveau n'est jamais bien sain,  
 Si beaucoup de vin ne l'abreuve.

PIERRE DE RONSARD



**L**ET my wine be fresh and cold  
 As an icicle, and bring  
 Pretty Jane and let her hold  
     Lute in hand that we may sing :  
     Then shall three dance in a ring :  
 And bid Barbara come with curls  
     Plaited like a frolicking  
 Fair Italian girl's.

See you not how time doth pass ?  
     And the morrows come too soon.  
 Fill my cup until the glass  
     Sparkles with the ruddy boon !  
     Out upon your mirthless loon !  
 Out upon your leech malign !  
     For my brain is out of tune  
 When I'm out of wine.

EN vain pour vous ce bouquet je compose,  
 En vain pour vous ma Déesse il est fait :  
 Vostre beauté est bouquet du bouquet,  
 La fleur des fleurs, la rose de la rose.

Vous et les fleurs differez d'une chose,  
 C'est que l'Hyver les fleurettes desfait,  
 Vostre Printemps en ses graces parfait,  
 Ne craint des ans nulle metamorphose.

Heureux bouquet, n'entre point au sejour  
 De ce beau sein, ce beau logis d'Amour,  
 Ne touche point ceste pomme jumelle.

Ton lustre gay d'ennuy se faniroit,  
 Et ta verdeur sans grace pourriroit,  
 Comme je suis fany pour l'amour d'elle.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

**I**N vain I bind a posy for you, dear.  
 In vain for you, my goddess, is it done ;  
 You are the only redolence, the one  
 Flower of all flowers, the rose that hath no peer.  
 Though Winter slay the buds, yet year by year  
 You in your beauty like the Spring begun  
 Move on with perfect grace, nor need you shun  
 Time's touch as they do the chill'd atmosphere.

But do not tarry long, O happy posy,  
 Within that bosom where soft Love doth sigh,  
 Nor trespass on the twin fruit lying rosy,  
 Lest there thy gladness fade with thy fair hues  
 And all thy green grow sickly, even as I  
 Fade for the dear love that she doth refuse.

NY voir flamber au point du jour les roses,  
 Ny liz plantez sus le bord d'un ruisseau,  
 Ny son de luth, ny ramage d'oyseau,  
 Ny dedans l'or les gemmes bien encloses,  
     Ny des Zephirs les gorgettes decloses,  
 Ny sur la mer le ronfler d'un vaisseau,  
 Ny bal de Nymphes au gazouillis de l'eau,  
 Ny voir fleurir au printemps toutes choses,  
     Ny camp armé de lances herissé,  
 Ny antre verd de mousse tapissé,  
 Ny des forests les cymes qui se pressent,  
     Ny des rochers le silence sacré,  
 Tant de plaisirs ne me donnent qu'un Pré,  
 Où sans espoir mes esperances paissent.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

**N**OT roses in the dawn-light reddening,  
 Nor lilies nigh the flood, nor lover's laud  
 Plucked from the lute, nor sound of birds that sing,  
     Nor gleam of jewels set in golden gaud,  
 Nor sight of the bare-throated zephyrs blowing,  
     Nor on the sea the surge some ship o'ertowers,  
 Nor dance of nymphs about some fountain flowing,  
     Nor the sweet Spring with all her glut of flowers,  
 Nor campèd host with bristling pikes agleam,  
     Nor caverns with smooth mosses carpeted,  
 Nor forest boughs that staunch the sun's clear stream,  
     Nor silence of dumb rocks have ever bred  
 Such pleasure in me as hath one fair mead,  
 Where in despair my foolish hopes do feed.

**Q**UAND vous serez bien vieille, au soir, à la  
 chandelle,  
 Assise auprès du feu, devidant et filant,  
 Direz chantant mes vers, en vous esmerveillant :  
 Ronsard me celebroit du temps que j'estois belle.

Lors vous n'aurez servante oyant telle nouvelle,  
 Desja sous le labeur à demy sommeillant,  
 Qui au bruit de mon nom ne s'aïlle resveillant,  
 Benissant vostre nom de louange immortelle.

Je seray sous la terre, et, fantosme sans os,  
 Par les ombres myrteux je prendray mon repos :  
 Vous serez au fouyer une vieille accroupie,

Regrettant mon amour et vostre fier desdain.  
 Vivez, si m'en croyez, n'attendez à demain :  
 Cueillez dès aujourd'huy les roses de la vie.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

WHEN you are an old crone, and crouched at  
eve by candlelight

Fumble for the soft thread twined about your  
wheel,

Then shall you quaver out what Ronsard sang when  
fain of you,

Ere your hair was grey or your heart too old to  
feel.

Then shall your serving-maid, full of sleep, out-  
wearied

With the long day's labour, leave her bed and  
listen long,

Praise on her lips for the sweetness that he sang of  
you,

And immortal blessing on your mortal lover's  
song.

I shall be dead and a boneless phantom slumbering  
Underneath the myrtle-boughs dark above my  
tomb ;

You by the hearthstone bent, and bitterly remember-  
ing,

Shall bewail your maiden scorn and all your  
withered bloom.

Live while you may, sweetheart, trust not the  
morrow's promises,

Now, while the heart is warm, your lover at  
your feet,

Gather swift the rose of Life with all the morning  
dew on it,

Or ever it be withered in the long day's dust and  
heat.

TOUT ce qu'icy la Nature environne,  
 Plus tost il naist, moins longuement il dure :  
 Le gay printemps s'enrichist de verdure,  
 Mais peu fleurist l'honneur de sa couronne.

L'ire du ciel facilement étonne  
 Les fruicts d'esté, qui craignent la froidure :  
 Contre l'hiver ont l'écorce plus dure  
 Les fruicts tardifs, ornement de l'autonne.

De ton printemps les fleurettes seichées  
 Seront un jour de leur tige arrachées,  
 Non la vertu, l'esprit et la raison,

A ces doux fruicts en toy meurs devant l'aage,  
 Ne faict l'esté, ny l'autonne dommage,  
 Ny la rigueur de la froide saison.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY



ALL things in Nature that do wax apace  
Wane with an equal swiftness. The glad Spring  
Puts on her greenness, but anon her face  
Doth find few flowers for its garlanding.  
So will unkindly tempest overtake  
The fruits of Summer that no frost survive ;  
But Autumn fruits, that 'gainst fell Winter make  
A thicker rind, grow slower and so thrive.  
Of thy sweet Spring the flowers shall one day  
Fall as thou failest. But whatso hath sprung  
From thy soul's virtue shall live on alway,  
And these fair fruits made ripe whiles thou art  
young,  
By heat and dew and the fell frost untainted  
Through all the seasons of all Time are sainted.

QUAND je pouvois (ce qu'ores je ne puis)  
 Gouster le miel de ce tant doux langage,  
 Vous me cachiez ce celeste visage,  
 Et ces beaux yeux, dont esclave je suis.

Et maintenant que mes tristes ennuy  
 Me font plus sourd qu'un essourdé rivage,  
 Vous souhaitez voir une froide image  
 Errant au fond des éternelles nuictz.

O quel malheur, ô quelle estrange peine !  
 Je puis bien voir, comme en peinture vaine,  
 Ce qui ne sert qu'à me faire mourir.

Je puis toucher ceste main blanche et tendre,  
 Voir ces beaux yeux : mais je ne puis entendre  
 Ce doux parler, qui me peult secourir.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

## ◇ ◇ ON HIS DEAFNESS ◇ ◇

WHEN I could taste—aye, me ! what now I  
lack—

Your honey'd speech, you closed on me the gate  
Of heav'n, your visage ; the immaculate  
Light of your eyes from me was holden back.  
More deafen'd than a rock by the sea-wrack  
Am I become whom now your eyes await  
To find their pleasure in this desperate  
Cold life astray upon its darkened track.

O hard misfortune ! Cruel destiny !  
As though it were but limner's counterfeit  
I see your beauty now my life doth fleet,  
I touch your tender hand and I do see  
Your lovely eyes, but cannot hear the sweet  
Comforting words that might have succoured me.

J'AY de vous voir beaucoup plus grand'envie  
 Qu'un prisonnier de voir sa liberté,  
 Ny qu'un aveugle a de voir la clarté,  
 Ny qu'un mourant de se revoir en vie.

Amour le veut, mon desir m'y convie,  
 Mais quelque dieu, ou quelque astre irité,  
 M'a, sans avoir ce malheur merité,  
 De vous ouïr la puissance ravie.

Je puis bien voir ceste grande beauté,  
 Mais je ne puis, ô quelle cruauté !  
 Ouïr la voix d'une si belle Dame.

Helas, Amour, le plus puissant des Dieux,  
 Rends moy l'ouïe et m'aveugle les yeux,  
 Car je la voy assez des yeux de l'ame.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

YOUR face is more desirable to me  
 Than freedom unto captives or than sight  
 Unto the blind or their remembered might  
 To men a-dying. So Love bids it be,  
 Wherein I do obey his dear decree.

But some offended God or starry sprite  
 Hath robbed me of my hearing and delight  
 In your dear words by harsh severity.

Still can I see her beauty without stain  
 Who may not—O intolerable lack!—  
 Hear aught that my dear Lady's voice may deign.  
 O Love that art most mighty, render back  
 My hearing and then blind me! Through the black  
 My soul's clear eyes shall see her beauty plain.

J'AYME la liberté, et languis en service,  
 Je n'ayme point la Court, et me fault courtiser,  
 Je n'ayme la feintise, et me fault deguiser,  
 J'ayme simplicité, et n'apprens que malice.

Je n'adore les biens, et sers à l'avarice,  
 Je n'ayme les honneurs, et me les fault priser,  
 Je veulx garder ma foy, et me la fault briser,  
 Je cherche la vertu, et ne trouve que vice.

Je cherche le repos, et trouver ne le puis,  
 J'embrasse le plaisir, et n'esprouve qu'ennuis,  
 Je n'ayme à discourir, en raison je me fonde :

J'ay le corps maladif, et me fault voyager,  
 Je suis né pour la Muse, on me fait mesnager :  
 Ne suis-je pas (Morel) le plus chetif du monde ?

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

**F**REEDOM I love, yet doe I live a slave ;  
 The Court I love not, yet must bow to Highness;  
 I love not feigning, yet must false behave ;  
     I love plain-dealing, and yet deal in slyness ;  
 I love not riches, and yet serve for pelf ;  
     I hail high honours, and yet hold them tawdry ;  
 My word I'd keep, and yet belie myself ;  
     Virtue I seek, and nothing find but bawdry ;  
 I am fain of rest, and cannot find it round me ;  
     Pleasure I grasp, and find it but a goad ;  
 I hate unreason, Reason doth confound me ;  
     My body's ill, yet must I take the road ;  
 Born for the Muse, want drives me : is there then  
 A soul more warped in all the world of men ?

COMME le champ semé en verdure foisonne,  
 De verdure se haulse en tuyau verdissant,  
 Du tuyau se herisse en épïc florissant,  
 D'épïc jaunît en grain que le chaud assaisonne :

Et comme en la saison le rustique moisonne  
 Les ondoyans cheveux du sillon blondissant,  
 Les met d'ordre en javelle, & du blé jaunissant  
 Sur le champ despouillé mille gerbes façonne :

Ainsi de peu à peu creut l'empire Romain,  
 Tant qu'il fut despouillé par la Barbare main,  
 Qui ne laissa de luy que ces marques antiques,

Que chacun va pillant : comme on void le gleneur  
 Cheminant pas à pas recueillir les reliques  
 De ce qui va tumbant après le moisonneur.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY



WHENAS the sown field bringeth forth her  
crop,

On hollow stalks it riseth up apace,  
Each stalk anon a-bristle at the top

With gold ears ripened in the sun's embrace ;  
In season due the reaping hind doth loot

Her locks of gold that ripple to the gust,  
And marks the swathes that tumble underfoot,

And draws a thousand sheaves from her rich dust.  
So Rome rose to her greatness transitory

Until the rude Barbarian hand threw down  
And left these relics of her antique glory

That men now plunder for their old renown,  
Like patient gleaners who, with backs a-double,  
Do seek for grain amid the straw and stubble.

COMME lon void de loing sur la mer courroucée  
 Une montaigne d'eau d'un grand branle on-  
 doyant,

Puis trainant mille flotz, d'un gros choc abboyant  
 Se crever contre un roc, où le vent l'a poussée :

Comme on void la fureur par l'Aquillon chassée  
 D'un sifflement aigu l'orage tournoyant,  
 Puis d'une aile plus large en l'air esbanoyant  
 Arrêter tout à coup sa carriere lassée :

Et comme on void la flamme ondoyant en ces lieux  
 Se rassemblant en un, s'aguiser vers les cieux,  
 Puis tumber languissante : ainsi parmy le monde

Erra la Monarchie : et croissant tout ainsi  
 Qu'un flot, qu'un vent, qu'un feu, sa course vaga-  
 bonde  
 Par un arrest fatal s'est venu' perdre icy.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

UPON the angered sea behold how proudly  
 The water-mountain rears its head and rolls  
 A thousand waves till, foiled and raging loudly  
 Against the wynd, it bursts upon the shoals.  
 Above the air behold the North Wynd beating  
 With shrilly blast that drives the squall about ;  
 Anon he'll fan with slower wing and fleeting,  
 And on a sudden all hys life ebb out.  
 Behold how wavering sparks diversely kindled  
 Will draw to flame and swiftly dissipate  
 In instant flashing skyward : so hath dwindled  
 Kingship upon thys earth, that waxing great  
 Like wave or wynd or beacon that is spent,  
 Found here the doom of all its brave intent.

**Q**UELLE es-tu, dis-le moi, si pauvrement vêtue ?  
 Je suis Religion, fille de Dieu connue.  
 Pourquoi l'habit as-tu d'une si pauvre laine ?  
 Pour ce que je méprise une richesse vaine.  
 Quel livre portes-tu ? Les loix de Dieu mon père,  
 Où de ses Testaments est compris le mystère.  
 Pourquoi l'estomac nu ? Découvrir la poitrine  
 Convient à moi qui veux une blanche doctrine.  
 Pourquoi sur cette Croix t'appui'-tu charitable ?  
 La Croix m'est un repos qui m'est fort agréable.  
 A quelle fin es-tu de ces ailes pourvue ?  
 J'apprends l'homme à voler au dessus de la nue.  
 Pourquoi si rayonnante es-tu de belles flammes ?  
 Les ténèbres je chasse au loin des saintes âmes.  
 Pourquoi ce mors de bride ? Afin que par con-  
 trainte  
 J'arrête la faveur de l'âme en douce crainte.  
 Et pourquoi sous tes pieds foules-tu la mort blême ?  
 A raison que je suis la mort de la mort même.

VAUQUELIN DE LA FRESNAYE

WHO art thou, girl, in such mean garb arrayed?  
I am Religion, God's own serving-maid.  
Why dost thou don such raiment? Since for me  
A richer one would seem but vanity.  
What book hast thou? God's gift it is, and there  
I find His Holy Testament writ fair.  
Why is thy breast uncovered? 'Tis, she saith,  
Because I keep there an unspotted Faith.  
Why dost thou lean on that rude Cross? Its shade  
Eternal solace for my soul hath made.  
Why art thou fledgèd thus? It is that I  
May teach men far above these clouds to fly.  
Why art thou set about with flame? My fire  
Beats off the shadow from God's holy choir.  
Why art thou bridled? Better so to hold  
The fervent soul within the heavenly fold.  
Why dost thou tread down Death? It is that I  
Am Death's own slayer, who can never die.

ICARE est chut ici, le jeune audacieux,  
 Qui pour voler au ciel eut assez de courage :  
 Ici tomba son corps dégarni de plumage,  
 Laissant tous braves cœurs de sa chute envieux.

O bienheureux travail d'un esprit glorieux,  
 Qui tire un si grand gain d'un si petit dommage !  
 O bienheureux malheur plein de tant d'avantage,  
 Qu'il rende le vaincu des ans victorieux !

Un chemin si nouveau n'étonna sa jeunesse,  
 Le pouvoir lui faillit, mais non la hardiesse ;  
 Il eut pour le brûler des astres le plus beau ;

Il mourut poursuivant une haute aventure ;  
 Le ciel fut son désir, la mer sa sépulture :  
 Est-il plus beau dessein, ou plus riche tombeau ?

PHILIPPE DESPORTES

HERE fell Icarus, that with daring glee  
 Launched his frail body thro' the airy deep ;

Here his unfledgèd corse flung down the steep,  
 Making all brave hearts wish to fall as he.

O happy travail ended gloriously,

How dear a payment for a pain so cheap !

And O most happy hurt such gain to reap  
 That from Time's durance set the captive free !

The dauntless youth from that unmeasured road

Shrank not away, though fickle power spurned  
 him ;

Over the furnace of the stars he strode

And died in seeking the bright orb that burned  
 him.

'Twas heav'n he sought and had the sea for shroud :

What quest is lovelier ? Where's a tomb more  
 proud ?

J'AIME la belle violette,  
 L'œillet et la pensée aussi,  
 J'aime la rose vermeillette,  
 Mais surtout j'aime le soulcy.

Belle fleur, jadis amoureuse  
 Du Dieu qui nous donne le jour,  
 Te dois-je nommer malheureuse,  
 Ou trop constante en ton amour ?

Ce Dieu qui en fleur t'a changée,  
 N'a point changé ta volonté ;  
 Encor, belle fleur orangée,  
 Sens-tu l'effort de sa beauté ?

Toujours ta face languissante  
 Aux rais de son œil s'espanist,  
 Et quand sa lumière s'absente,  
 Soudain la tienne se ternist.

Je t'aime, soulcy misérable,  
 Je t'aime, malheureuse fleur,  
 D'autant plus que tu m'es semblable  
 Et en constance et en malheur.



## ◇ THE SUNFLOWER ◇

UPON the violet I dote,  
 The pink, the rose, the pansyc stir  
 My heart, and yet I love them not  
 Soe well as the faire sunflowèr,  
*(Sleepe, sleepe, my heart, and dreame of her !)*

'Tis long since thou hast lovèd hym  
 The God of Light that is our daye,  
 And is it but a hapless whym  
 That thy true love turnes not awaye ?  
*(Turne, turne, my heart, to thy true faye !)*

The God that made thee flower-wise  
 He could not make thy love growe weak ;  
 And dost thou feel hys blazing eyes  
 Still bright above thy burnyng cheek ?  
*(Seeke her, my heart, go seeke, go seeke !)*

And still thy soft face lookyth up  
 To see the glorye of hys glance ;  
 Whenas hys golden eyelids droop  
 Thine own soft eyes doe looke askance.  
*(O fairest Ladye in all France !)*

Sunflower of unhappy troth,  
 I love thee soe for that we twaine  
 Turne not awaye although we both  
 Doe love and are not loved againe.  
*(O Ladye-flower of Touraine !)*

J'aime la belle violette,  
L'œillet et la pensée aussi ;  
J'aime la rose vermeillette,  
Mais surtout j'aime le soulcy.

GILLES DURANT

Upon the violet I dote,  
The pink, the rose, the pansye stir  
My heart, and yet I love them not  
Soe well as the faire sunflowèr.  
*(Sleepe, sleepe, my heart, and dreame of her !)*

## STANCES À LA MARQUISE

MARQUISE, si mon visage  
A quelques traits un peu vieux,  
Souvenez-vous qu'à mon âge  
Vous ne vaudrez guère mieux.

Le temps aux plus belles choses  
Se plaît à faire un affront,  
Et saura faner vos roses  
Comme il a ridé mon front.

Le même cours des planètes  
Règle nos jours et nos nuits,  
On m'a vu ce que vous êtes ;  
Vous serez ce que je suis.

Cependant j'ai quelques charmes  
Qui sont assez éclatants  
Pour n'avoir pas trop d'alarmes  
De ces ravages du temps.

Vous en avez qu'on adore,  
Mais ceux que vous méprisez  
Pourraient bien durer encore  
Quand ceux-là seront usés.

Ils pourront sauver la gloire  
Des yeux qui me semblent doux,  
Et dans mille ans faire croire  
Ce qu'il me plaira de vous.

## XXVIII

## STANZAS TO THE MARQUISE

MARQUISE, if now upon my face  
Some wrinkles show, remember only  
The same will mar your comely grace  
When you are old and you are lonely.

Time spares no beauty. Year by year  
He marks with his fell sign abhorrèd,  
And he will blanch your roses, dear,  
As he has wrinkled all my forehead.

The wheeling planets bring our days  
And nights in order due divided,  
I once could win the loving gaze,  
And you will lose it too as I did.

Yet have I something that is fair  
To leave undimmed when I've departed,  
Something that makes my spirit dare  
To meet old Time and leave him thwarted.

You have the charms men dote upon  
But those you scorn in me as fleeting  
May be alive when you are gone  
And all your beauty dust, my sweeting.

Those eyes that once seemed dear to me  
May shine with an undying glory,  
And in a thousand years may be  
Still bright because I tell their story.

Chez cette race nouvelle  
Où j'aurai quelque crédit,  
Vous ne passerez pour belle  
Qu'autant que je l'aurai dit.

Pensez-y, belle Marquise :  
Quoiqu'un grison fasse effroi,  
Il vaut bien qu'on le courtise,  
Quand il est fait comme moi.

PIERRE CORNEILLE

And when that race of later men  
Read of this lovely maid, they'll shape her  
Again in fancy as my pen  
Has set her beauty down on paper.

Then think, Marquise, and do no wrong  
To him whose grizzled head doth scare you.  
Love him a little for the long  
Tribute of love that he may bear you.

## ÉPITAPHE D'ÉLISABETH RANQUET

NE verse point de pleurs sur cette sépulture,  
Passant : ce lit funèbre est un lit précieux,  
Où gît d'un corps tout pur la cendre toute pure ;  
Mais le zèle du cœur vit encore en ces lieux.

Avant que de payer le droit à la nature,  
Son âme, s'élevant au delà de ses yeux,  
Avait au Créateur uni la créature ;  
Et marchant sur la terre elle était dans les cieux.

Les pauvres bien mieux qu'elle ont senti sa richesse :  
L'humilité, la peine étaient son allégresse ;  
Et son dernier soupir fut un soupir d'amour.

Passant, qu'à son exemple un beau feu te transporte,  
Et loin de la pleurer d'avoir perdu le jour,  
Crois qu'on ne meurt jamais quand on meurt de la  
sorte.

PIERRE CORNEILLE



## XXIX

## EPITAPH FOR ELIZABETH RANQUET

WEEP not, Beholder, on thys sepulchre :  
Thys coffin is a very precious bed,

Where lies, immaculate, the dust of her  
By whose strong zeal it is still tenanted.

Ere unto Nature the last due she paid

Her soul, uplifted beyond mortal view,  
Gave to her Maker the frail thing He made,  
Though treading earth 'twas Heavenly air she  
drew.

More than her own her wealth was the poor's  
blessing,

Her toil and meekness to her mirth were turned,  
Her latest sigh was full of love's professing.

Inspire thy soul by this fair life inurned,  
Forbear from grief in the sure faith there is  
Nor death nor dark for those who die like this.

## LE LION S'EN ALLANT EN GUERRE

LE lion dans sa tête avait une entreprise ;  
 Il tint conseil de guerre, envoya ses prévôts,  
 Fit avertir les animaux.

Tous furent du dessein, chacun selon sa guise :

L'éléphant devait sur son dos

Porter l'attirail nécessaire,

Et combattre à son ordinaire ;

L'ours, s'apprêter pour les assauts ;

Le renard, ménager de secrètes pratiques ;

Et le singe, amuser l'ennemi par ses tours.

"Renvoyez," dit quelqu'un, "les ânes, qui sont  
 lourds,

Et les lièvres, sujets à des terreurs paniques."

"Point du tout," dit le roi, "je les veux employer :

Notre troupe sans eux ne serait pas complète.

L'âne effraiera les gens, nous servant de trompette ;

Et le lièvre pourra nous servir de courrier."

Le monarque prudent et sage

De ses moindres sujets sait tirer quelque usage,

Et connaît les divers talents.

Il n'est rien d'inutile aux personnes de sens.

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE

## HOW THE LION WENT TO WAR

THE lion, planning a great expedition,  
 Took counsel, bidding his brave sergeants call  
 Unto the colours every animal,  
 Giving to each his due rank and condition.  
 The elephant should carry on his back  
 All warlike tackle and should smite the foe  
 With elephantine tusk and trunk and toe ;  
 The bear as wonted should make his attack ;  
 The fox should overthrow with cunning plot ;  
 The monkey thwart with many a curious antic.  
 Then some one said : “ Dismiss the ass—a sot,  
 Likewise the hare, whom sudden fear makes  
 frantic.”

Whereon the King : “ Nay, unto each attaches  
 His special duty. No one can be spared.  
 By Neddy’s braying shall the foe be scared,  
 While the fleet hare shall carry our dispatches.”

A monarch, if both wise and shrewd is he,  
 In his least subject finds utility—  
 Talents that serve for great things or for small  
 things :  
 A man of sense finds something good in all things.

LE MULET SE VANTANT  
 ◇ ◇ DE SA GÉNÉALOGIE ◇ ◇

**L**E mulet d'un prélat se piquait de noblesse,  
 Et ne parlait incessamment  
 Que de sa mère la jument,  
 Dont il contait mainte prouesse :  
 Elle avait fait ceci, puis avait été là.  
 Son fils prétendait pour cela  
 Qu'on le dût mettre dans l'histoire.  
 Il eût cru s'abaisser servant un médecin.  
 Étant devenu vieux, on le mit au moulin :  
 Son père l'âne alors lui revint en mémoire.

Quand le malheur ne serait bon  
 Qu'à mettre un sot à la raison,  
 Toujours serait-ce à juste cause  
 Qu'on le dit bon à quelque chose.

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE

## THE MULE THAT BOASTED

◇ ◇ OF HIS PEDIGREE ◇ ◇

A BISHOP'S mule, with pride grown over-  
bearing,

Had ever on the tip of his loose tongue

The mare that suckled him when he was young,  
And countless stories of her strength and daring.

She had done this, she had been there :

He made it seem that such a mare

Should from historians have celebration.

A doctor bought him from the man of God ;

Grown old, within a mill the poor beast trod :

He then remembered his long-eared relation.

Where hardship proves for fools the only fence

To keep within the borderline of sense,

The amplest reason there will always be

To bless the uses of adversity.

◇ ◇ LE VIEILLARD ◇ ◇  
ET LES TROIS JEUNES HOMMES

UN octogénaire plantait.

“ Passe encor de bâtir ; mais planter à cet âge ! ”  
Disaient trois jouvenceaux, enfants du voisinage ;

Assurément il radotait.

“ Car, au nom des dieux, je vous prie,  
Quel fruit de ce labeur pouvez-vous recueillir ?  
Autant qu'un patriarche il vous faudrait vieillir.

A quoi bon charger votre vie  
Des soins d'un avenir qui n'est pas fait pour vous ?  
Ne songez désormais qu'à vos erreurs passées :  
Quittez le long espoir et les vastes pensées ;  
Tout cela ne convient qu'à nous.”

“ Il ne convient pas à vous-mêmes,”  
Repartit le vieillard. “ Tout établissement  
Vient tard et dure peu. La main des Parques blêmes  
De vos jours et des miens se joue également.  
Nos termes sont pareils par leur courte durée.  
Qui de nous des clartés de la voûte azurée  
Doit jouir le dernier ? Est-il aucun moment  
Qui vous puisse assurer d'un second seulement ?  
Mes arrière-neveux me devront cet ombrage :

Eh bien ! défendez-vous au sage  
De se donner des soins pour le plaisir d'autrui ?  
Cela même est un fruit que je goûte aujourd'hui :  
J'en puis jouir demain, et quelques jours encore ;  
Je puis enfin compter l'aurore  
Plus d'une fois sur vos tombeaux.”

Le vieillard eut raison : l'un des trois jouvenceaux  
Se noya dès le port, allant à l'Amérique.

◇ ◇ THE OLD MAN ◇ ◇  
AND THE THREE YOUTHS

A MAN of eighty planted everywhere.  
“ Building might pass, but planting . . . how  
absurd ! ”

Said three young fellows whom he overheard.

“ He cannot be all there.”

“ For how in reason,” so they bid him tell,

“ Can you expect to gather of your trees ?

You’ll need to go on living centuries.

And why should you thus swell

Your daily cares for fruit you’ll never store ?

To ponder on repentance were more fit.

As for ambition, come, abandon it

To younger fellows whom it’s fitter for ! ”

“ Not so,” said greybeard then. “ All certain growth

Though slow to wax doth wither all too soon.

Or young or old Death deals alike to both,

Our life’s so brief a boon.

Who knows which one of us shall look the last

Upon the day ? Which one of us dare boast

His certainty of life ? When I’m a ghost

My seed will thank me for this shadow cast.

Do you forbid a wiseacre to sow

For others reaping on the score of waste ?

Their future pleasure is a fruit I taste

And find a sweet delight in here and now.

Who knows indeed ? I may

Watch the sun rise above your tombs one day.”

Greybeard was right. The first one of the three

Was drowned in port or ever he set sail.

L'autre, afin de monter aux grandes dignités,  
Dans les emplois de Mars servant la république,  
Par un coup imprévu vit ses jours emportés.

Le troisième tomba d'un arbre  
Que lui-même il voulut enter ;  
Et pleurés du vieillard, il grava sur leur marbre  
Ce que je viens de raconter.

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE



The second one, accoutred in his mail,  
Was killed by chance among his soldiery.  
The third fell from a tree  
That he was grafting. Then the old, belated  
Greybeard did weep and grave above their tomb  
The touching story of their threefold doom  
That I have here related.

TU dis partout du mal de moi ;  
Je dis partout du bien de toi.  
Mais vois quel malheur est le nôtre :  
On ne nous croit ni l'un ni l'autre.

BERNARD DE LA MONNOIE

YOU'VE never a good word for me ;  
I sing your praise incessantly.  
Alas for both, since no one can  
Believe the word of either man !

◇ LE PHILOSOPHE ◇  
ET LE CHAT-HUANT

PERSÉCUTÉ, proscrit, chassé de son asile,  
 Pour avoir appelé les choses par leur nom,  
 Un pauvre philosophe errait de ville en ville,  
 Emportant avec lui tous ses biens, sa raison.  
 Un jour qu'il méditait sur le fruit de ses veilles  
 (C'était dans un grand bois), il voit un chat-huant  
     Entouré de geais, de corneilles,  
     Qui le harcelaient en criant :  
     " C'est un coquin ! c'est un impie,  
     Un ennemi de la patrie !  
 Il faut le plumer vif : oui, oui, plumons, plumons !  
     Ensuite nous le jugerons."  
 Et tous fondaient sur lui : la malheureuse bête,  
 Tournant et retournant sa bonne et grosse tête,  
 Leur disait, mais en vain, d'excellentes raisons.  
 Touché de son malheur, car la philosophie  
     Nous rend plus doux et plus humains,  
 Notre sage fait fuir la cohorte ennemie,  
 Puis dit au chat-huant : " Pourquoi ces assassins  
     En voulaient-ils à votre vie ?  
 Que leur avez-vous fait ? " L'oiseau lui répondit :  
 " Rien du tout. Mon seul crime est d'y voir clair la  
     nuit."

JEAN-PIERRE CLARIS DE FLORIAN

◇   ◇   THE SAGE   ◇   ◇  
AND THE SCREECH-OWL

ILL-USED because his tongue had given  
True names to things, into the lanes  
A wise man from his home was driven  
    Beggared of all save his own brains.  
And, pondering on his hapless cause  
    Within a wood profound, he spied  
A screech-owl whom the jays and daws  
    All pestered and decried.  
“ A rascal he !   A heretic !  
A traitor to his land !   Come quick !  
    Pluck him alive !   Aye, tail to head !  
    We'll try him after he is dead ! ”

They fell upon him.   Vainly the poor owl  
Gave excellent good answers to each fowl  
    From side to side assailing him.   The sage  
Ran to his rescue, pitying his plight  
    (Since wisdom seeks all suffering to assuage),  
And put his flock of enemies to flight.

Then said he to the owl : “ Why do they plot  
    Against your life and wish you dead ?  
    What have you done ? ”   The poor owl said :  
“ I see by night when they cannot.”

A C C O U R S, jeune Chromis, je t'aime, et je suis  
belle,

Blanche comme Diane et légère comme elle !

Comme elle grande et fière ; et les bergers, le soir,

Lorsque, les yeux baissés, je passe sans les voir,

Doutent si je ne suis qu'une simple mortelle,

Et, me suivant des yeux, disent : " Comme elle est  
belle ! "

ANDRÉ CHÉNIER

O H, come to me, Chromis ! I love thee. My  
beauty is one

In pallor with Dian's, my feet are as limber to run,  
My body as proud and well-shapen. The shepherds,  
I ween,

At eve when I pass them, eyes drooping and none  
of them seen,

Do wonder if I be a mortal, low murmuring this—  
The eyes of them loathing to leave me—"How lovely  
she is !"

**D**E nuit, la Nymphé errante à travers le bois  
 sombre  
 Aperçoit le Satyre ; et, le fuyant dans l'ombre,  
 De loin, d'un cri perfide elle va l'appelant ;  
 Le pied-de-chèvre accourt, sur sa trace volant,  
 Et dans une eau stagnante, à ses pas opposée,  
 Tombe, et sa plainte amère excite leur risée.

ANDRÉ CHÉNIER



A NYMPH astray within the wood by night  
Beholds a satyr prowling and takes flight,  
Sending afar her feignèd cry to snare  
The goat-hooves hot upon her traces there ;  
And in a pool he tumbles, crying out  
Amid the laughter of the woodland rout.

**T**OUJOURS ce souvenir m'attendrit et me touche,  
Quand lui-même, appliquant la flûte sur ma  
bouche,

Riant et m'asseyant sur lui, près de son cœur,  
M'appelait son rival et déjà son vainqueur.  
Il façonnait ma lèvre inhabile et peu sûre  
A souffler une haleine harmonieuse et pure ;  
Et ses savantes mains prenaient mes jeunes doigts,  
Les levaient, les baissaient, recommençaient vingt fois,  
Leur enseignant ainsi, quoique faibles encore,  
A fermer tour à tour les trous du buis sonore.

ANDRÉ CHÉNIER

## XXXVII

## ◇ ◇ ◇ THE FLUTE ◇ ◇ ◇

I WEEP, remembering his kindness yet,  
How his own flute upon my lips he'd set.  
Perched on his lap, he'd smile on me and vow  
I played it better than himself knew how.  
Under his tutoring my soft lips soon  
Out of the scale would conjure the sweet tune.  
Lifted and lowered by his patient care,  
At last grown wise, my hands would falter where  
His own had prompted them, and on the reed  
The notches sang by my slow fingers freed.

## ◇ LA COURONNE EFFEUILLÉE ◇

J'IRAI, j'irai porter ma couronne effeuillée  
 Au jardin de mon père où revit toute fleur ;  
 J'y répandrai longtemps mon âme agenouillée :  
 Mon père a des secrets pour vaincre la douleur.

J'irai, j'irai lui dire, au moins avec mes larmes :  
 " Regardez, j'ai souffert. . . ." Il me regardera,  
 Et sous mes jours changés, sous mes pâleurs sans  
     charmes,  
 Parce qu'il est mon père il me reconnaîtra.

Il dira : " C'est donc vous, chère âme désolée !  
 La terre manque-t-elle à vos pas égarés ?  
 Chère âme, je suis Dieu : ne soyez plus troublée ;  
 Voici votre maison, voici mon cœur, entrez ! "

MARCELINE DESBORDES-VALMORE

XXXVIII

◇ ◇ THE WITHERED CROWN ◇ ◇

I WILL carry my crown with all its leafage tumbled  
To my father's garden wherein every leaf  
Grows green again. There shall my soul be humbled:  
He hath a secret solace for all grief.

I will say unto him, with my hot tears flowing :  
“ Behold how I am hurt.” He will not heed  
My changèd ways, my withered cheeks, still knowing  
That I am his returnèd child indeed.

Then will he say : “ Dear wandered soul, I find thee !  
Doth the earth fail thee, O poor dispossess ?  
I am the Lord. My house is thine. Behind thee  
Put all thy grief, and enter in and rest.”

OUI, je vous revois tous, et toutes, âmes mortes !  
 O chers essaims groupés aux fenêtres, aux  
 portes !

Les bras tendus vers vous, je crois vous ressaisir,  
 Comme on croit dans les eaux embrasser des visages  
 Dont le miroir trompeur réfléchit les images,  
 Mais glace le baiser aux lèvres du désir.

Toi qui fis la mémoire, est-ce pour qu'on oublie ? . . .  
 Non, c'est pour rendre au temps à la fin tous ses jours,  
 Pour faire confluer, là-bas, en un seul cours,  
 Le passé, l'avenir, ces deux moitiés de vie  
 Dont l'une dit jamais et l'autre dit toujours.  
 Ce passé, doux Éden dont notre âme est sortie,  
 De notre éternité ne fait-il pas partie ?  
 Où le temps a cessé tout n'est-il pas présent ?  
 Dans l'immuable sein qui contiendra nos âmes  
 Ne rejoindrons-nous pas tout ce que nous aimâmes  
 Au foyer qui n'a plus d'absent ?

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE

AH, yes, belovèd kindred, I behold  
 Your shapes by door and window as of old  
 Thronging in welcome! Your dear hands I grip  
 As once in life, like some fond dupe that sees  
 In mocking water Love's fair images  
 And sets his warm mouth on its frozen lip.

Must we renounce the memory Thou hast wrought?  
 Nay. Unto Time's vast river shall be brought  
 The burden of all our tributary lore.  
 Future and Past shall in that flood be bound,  
 And our divided being shall have found  
 One voice for "ever" and for "nevermore."

Shall not we breathe our dear lost Eden's air  
 In that Eternity that we shall share?  
 Where no Time is can time cease or begin?  
 In the calm folds of the Eternal breast  
 Shall we not find all our beloved at rest  
 Round that bright home where all are welcomed  
 in?

QU'IL est doux, qu'il est doux d'écouter des  
histoires,  
Des histoires du temps passé,  
Quand les branches d'arbre sont noires,  
Quand la neige est épaisse et charge un sol glacé ;  
Quand seul dans un ciel pâle un peuplier s'élance,  
Quand sous le manteau blanc qui vient de le cacher  
L'immobile corbeau sur l'arbre se balance,  
Comme la girouette au bout du long clocher !

Qu'il est doux, qu'il est doux d'écouter des histoires,  
Des histoires du temps passé,  
Quand les branches d'arbre sont noires,  
Quand la neige est épaisse et charge un sol glacé !

ALFRED DE VIGNY



HOW lovely are the stories  
That tell of long ago  
When all the trees are barren  
And heavy lies the snow  
On iron earth below !

When on the pallid skyline  
The lonely poplar-tree  
Leaps up, and there the raven  
Snow-pied sits solemnly  
As though a vane were he !

How lovely are the stories  
That tell of long ago  
When all the trees are leafless  
And earth lies frore below  
Her coverlid of snow !

**M**ONTE, écureuil, monte au grand  
chêne,

Sur la branche des cieux prochaine,  
Qui plie et tremble comme un jonc.  
Cigogne, aux vieilles tours fidèle,  
Oh ! vole et monte à tire-d'aile  
De l'église à la citadelle,  
Du haut clocher au grand donjon.

Vieux aigle, monte de ton aire  
A la montagne centenaire  
Que blanchit l'hiver éternel.  
Et toi qu'en ta couche inquiète  
Jamais l'aube ne vit muette,  
Monte, monte, vive alouette,  
Vive alouette, monte au ciel !

Et maintenant, du haut de l'arbre,  
Des flèches de la tour de marbre,  
Du grand mont, du ciel enflammé,  
A l'horizon, parmi la brume,  
Voyez-vous flotter une plume  
Et courir un cheval qui fume,  
Et revenir mon bien-aimé ?

VICTOR HUGO

CLIMB, squirrel, climb the tall oak-tree  
 To where the last sprays dizzily  
 Lean out and tremble reedy-soft !  
 Fly, doting stork, that still dost dwell  
 Beside thine ancient pinnacle,  
 From spire to rampart and the fell  
 Height of the frowning keep aloft !

Old eagle, quit thy cleft and ride  
 Above thine ancient hills that hide  
 In raiment of eternal ice !  
 Low-nested bird whose songs begin  
 When dawn first brings the daylight in,  
 Fly upward with thy happy din,  
 O lark, to gates of paradise !

Gaze from thy tree, or mime the moon  
 From topmost towers of marble hewn,  
 High tor or heaven ! Seest thou then  
 Horizon-far through mist the pale  
 Glint of helm-feathers on the mail,  
 Or shod hooves beating like a flail  
 To bring my lover home agen ?

IL neigeait. On était vaincu par sa conquête.  
 Pour la première fois l'aigle baissait la tête.  
 Sombres jours ! l'empereur revenait lentement,  
 Laissant derrière lui brûler Moscou fumant.  
 Il neigeait. L'âpre hiver fondait en avalanche.  
 Après la plaine blanche une autre plaine blanche.  
 On ne connaissait plus les chefs ni le drapeau.  
 Hier la grande armée, et maintenant troupeau.  
 On ne distinguait plus les ailes ni le centre.  
 Il neigeait. Les blessés s'abritaient dans le ventre  
 Des chevaux morts ; au seuil des bivouacs désolés  
 On voyait des clairons à leur poste gelés,  
 Restés debout, en selle et muets, blancs de givre,  
 Collant leur bouche en pierre aux trompettes de cuivre.  
 Boulets, mitraille, obus, mêlés aux flocons blancs,  
 Pleuvaient ; les grenadiers, surpris d'être tremblants,  
 Marchaient pensifs, la glace à leur moustache grise.  
 Il neigeait, il neigeait toujours ! La froide bise  
 Sifflait ; sur le verglas, dans des lieux inconnus,  
 On n'avait pas de pain et l'on allait pieds nus.  
 Ce n'étaient plus des cœurs vivants, des gens de  
 guerre,  
 C'était un rêve errant dans la brume, un mystère,  
 Une procession d'ombres sur le ciel noir.  
 La solitude, vaste, épouvantable à voir,  
 Partout apparaissait, muette vengeresse.  
 Le ciel faisait sans bruit avec la neige épaisse  
 Pour cette immense armée un immense linceul ;  
 Et, chacun se sentant mourir, on était seul.

VICTOR HUGO

SNOW fell and brought the triumpher to bay.  
 Now at the last the eagle's spirit broke.  
 Dark days ! With slow steps on the frozen way  
 The Emperor fled from conquered Moscow's  
 smoke.

Snow fell. Now like an avalanche awoke  
 Stark Winter. White plain followed after white.  
 None knew who led him nor what flag he bore,  
 For what had been an army yesternight  
 Was now a flock astray. None knew aright  
 If he were rear or vanguard. Evermore  
 Snow fell. Nigh horses dead hurt men lay frore,  
 Fain of their warmth. By bivouacs far away  
 A trumpeter with nerveless hand would stay  
 Bolt upright in his saddle, still unblown  
 The bugle fast upon his lips of stone.  
 Shells, bullets, grapeshot in the snow like sleet  
 Rained all about. The grenadiers slunk past  
 Surprised at their own fear. And still down beat  
 The snow ! The snow ! And now the northern blast  
 Whistled aloud ; and many with bare feet  
 And foodless still marched on in blind retreat  
 By unknown places. They were dead that walked,  
 Not soldiers any more. A dream were they,  
 A wonder in the wide white mist astray  
 Of ghosts processional. More dreadful stalked  
 The unending solitude that stretched away,  
 A mute avenger that was sure to slay.  
 Down silent skies a snow-spun shroud was sewn  
 Wherein to wrap the innumerable array,  
 Each soul nigh death most dreadfully alone.

COMME le matin rit sur les roses en pleurs !  
 Oh ! les charmants petits amoureux qu'ont les  
 fleurs !

Ce n'est dans les jasmins, ce n'est dans les pervenches  
 Qu'un éblouissement de folles ailes blanches  
 Qui vont, viennent, s'en vont, reviennent, se fermant,  
 Se rouvrant, dans un vaste et doux frémissement.  
 O printemps ! quand on songe à toutes les missives  
 Qui des amants rêveurs vont aux belles pensives,  
 A ces cœurs confiés au papier, à ce tas  
 De lettres que le feutre écrit au taffetas,  
 Aux messages d'amour, d'ivresse et de délire  
 Qu'on reçoit en avril et qu'en mai l'on déchire,  
 On croit voir s'envoler, au gré du vent joyeux,  
 Dans les prés, dans les bois, sur les eaux, dans les  
 cieux,

Et rôder en tous lieux, cherchant partout une âme,  
 Et courir à la fleur en sortant de la femme,  
 Les petits morceaux blancs, chassés en tourbillons,  
 De tous les billets doux, devenus papillons.

VICTOR HUGO

NOW weeping roses the dawn's welcome take !  
What darling lovers the sweet flowers make !  
Now are the jasmin and the periwinkle  
With endless tumult of white wings a-twinkle  
That come and go, now wafted, now alit  
With wings close-folded ere again they flit  
In one vast impulse. Spring-time ! Do but ponder  
On wistful lovers who, when they were fonder,  
Poured out their hearts on paper ! How they thrilled  
With eager vows, their panting bosoms spilled  
In messages of April—torn and flouted  
Ere on their stems the shy June rosebuds pouted !  
Thus you behold in all those white wings there  
By wood and lawn, and up in the glad air—  
Seeking from flow'r to flow'r with love's sweet aching  
A mate more dear than her they are forsaking—  
The litter of sweet love-notes that arise  
In ardent eddies of white butterflies.

## LA SOURCE ET L'OCÉAN

LA source tombait du rocher  
Goutte à goutte à la mer affreuse.  
L'océan, fatal au nocher,  
Lui dit : " Que me veux-tu, pleureuse ?

" Je suis la tempête et l'effroi ;  
Je finis où le ciel commence.  
Est-ce que j'ai besoin de toi,  
Petite, moi qui suis l'immense ? "

La source dit au gouffre amer :  
" Je te donne, sans bruit ni gloire,  
Ce qui te manque, ô vaste mer !  
Une goutte d'eau qu'on peut boire."

VICTOR HUGO



## THE STREAM AND THE SEA

THE streamlet o'er the foreland fed  
With falling drops the dreadful sea.  
The pilot-drowning ocean said :

“What wouldst thou, weeping one, with me ?

“I am the tempest. I am dread.

I finish where the sky meets earth.

What profits me thy tiny thread

In waters of unmeasured girth ? ”

The stream unto the sea replied :

“Unmarked I mingle on thy brink

What thou dost lack, O bitter tide !

A drop that thirsting men may drink.”

MES vers fuiraient, doux et frêles,  
Vers votre jardin si beau,  
Si mes vers avaient des ailes,  
Des ailes comme l'oiseau.

Ils voleraient, étincelles,  
Vers votre foyer qui rit,  
Si mes vers avaient des ailes,  
Des ailes comme l'esprit.

Près de vous, purs et fidèles,  
Ils accourraient nuit et jour,  
Si mes vers avaient des ailes,  
Des ailes comme l'amour.

VICTOR HUGO

MY verses should alight, O Love,  
 Within your garden, if my words  
 But beat the same soft wings above  
 As bear aloft the birds.

Like wafted sparks, my words adrift  
 Should fill your hearth, a glowing throng,  
 If they but bore the wings that lift  
 This loving heart in song.

They'd flock to you by night and day,  
 Still staunch in their sweet tarryings,  
 If but my verses beat a way  
 With Love's unwearied wings.

J'E suis le roi qu'emplit la puissance sinistre ;  
 Je fais bâtir le temple et raser les cités ;  
 Hiram mon architecte et Charos mon ministre  
 Rêvent à mes côtés ;

L'un étant ma truelle et l'autre étant mon glaive,  
 Je les laisse songer et ce qu'ils font est bien ;  
 Mon souffle monte au ciel plus haut que ne s'élève  
 L'ouragan libyen ;

Dieu même en est parfois remué. Fils d'un crime,  
 J'ai la sagesse énorme et sombre ; et le démon  
 Prendrait, entre le ciel suprême et son abîme,  
 Pour juge Salomon.

C'est moi qui fais trembler et c'est moi qui fais  
 croire ;  
 Conquérant on m'admire, et, pontife, on me suit ;  
 Roi, j'accable ici-bas les hommes par la gloire,  
 Et, prêtre, par la nuit ;

J'ai vu la vision des festins et des coupes  
 Et le doigt écrivant Mané Thécel Pharès,  
 Et la guerre, les chars, les clairons, et les croupes  
 Des chevaux effarés ;

Je suis grand ; je ressemble à l'idole morose ;  
 Je suis mystérieux comme un jardin fermé ;  
 Pourtant, quoique je sois plus puissant que la rose  
 N'est belle au mois de mai,

TEMPLES I rear. By me are cities tumbled.  
 My evil might is merciless. These twain,  
 Charos and Hiram, at my side are humbled  
 And serve me, hand and brain.

One waves the sword, one holds the trowel ready.  
 I smile, beholding these on either hand.  
 My breath is mightier than the hot gale's eddy  
 That whirls the Libyan sand.

Even God is stirred. Though born of sin my dust is,  
 I am wise with a dark wisdom. On the abyss  
 Satan would set me up to render justice  
 Between God's realm and his.

Hierarch and King, men bow to him that kindles  
 Pride in his prowess, awe for the divine,  
 Rapt by his glory or the light that dwindles  
 Within his darkened shrine.

I have seen the victor feasting on his plunder,  
 Beheld the writing on the wall, the lust  
 Of slaughter, chariots, and wild hooves that thunder  
 Above the battle-dust.

Greatness is mine who am like an idol glooming,  
 A high-walled garden odorous and dim,  
 Yet, though the redolence of roses blooming  
 Be less than my least whim,

On peut me retirer mon sceptre d'or qui brille,  
Et mon trône, et l'archer qui veille sur ma tour,  
Mais on n'ôtera pas, ô douce jeune fille,  
De mon âme l'amour ;

On n'en ôtera pas l'amour, ô vierge blonde  
Qui comme une lueur te mires dans les eaux,  
Pas plus qu'on n'ôtera de la forêt profonde  
La chanson des oiseaux.

VICTOR HUGO

From my strong hand this sceptre shall be wrenched,  
The watcher on my palace wall be slain,  
Ere in my soul Love's endless fount be quenched  
And I be no more fain ;

When I grow blind to thee, O sweet ! O lovely !  
When the deep well within my soul lies froze,  
Then shall the birds within the shadowy grove lie  
Songless for evermore.

◇ CHANSON ◇  
DE GRAND-PÈRE

DANSEZ, les petites filles,  
Toutes en rond,  
En vous voyant si gentilles,  
Les bois riront.

Dansez, les petites reines,  
Toutes en rond,  
Les amoureux sous les frênes  
S'embrasseront.

Dansez, les petites folles,  
Toutes en rond,  
Les bouquins dans les écoles  
Bougonneront.

Dansez, les petites belles,  
Toutes en rond,  
Les oiseaux avec leurs ailes  
Applaudiront.

Dansez, les petites fées,  
Toutes en rond,  
Dansez, de bleuets coiffées,  
D'aurore au front.

Dansez, les petites femmes,  
Toutes en rond,  
Les messieurs diront aux dames  
Ce qu'ils voudront.

VICTOR HUGO



XLVII  
GRANDFATHER'S  
◇ ◇ SONG ◇ ◇

DANCE, my darlings,  
In a ring ;  
Woods to see you  
Laugh for joy.

Dance, my queenlings,  
In a ring ;  
Leaves hide kissing  
Girl and boy.

Dance, my wildings,  
In a ring ;  
Leave the solemn  
Books behind.

Dance, my beauties,  
In a ring ;  
Wings in praise shall  
Clap the wind.

Dance, my fairies,  
In a ring ;  
Flow'r on head and  
Dawn on brow.

Dance, my darlings,  
In a ring.  
Swains shall whisper  
Low their vow.

# XLVIII

## ◇ ◇ DANS LES BOIS ◇ ◇

AU printemps, l'oiseau naît et chante :  
 N'avez-vous jamais ouï sa voix ? . . .  
 Elle est pure, simple et touchante  
 La voix de l'oiseau—dans les bois !

L'été, l'oiseau cherche l'oiselle ;  
 Il aime, et n'aime qu'une fois !  
 Qu'il est doux, paisible et fidèle  
 Le nid de l'oiseau—dans les bois !

Puis, quand vient l'automne brumeuse  
 Il se tait . . . avant les temps froids.  
 Hélas ! qu'elle doit être heureuse  
 La mort de l'oiseau—dans les bois !

GÉRARD DE NERVAL

XLVIII

◇ WITHIN THE WOOD ◇

IN spring-time birds are born and sing !  
Their voices have you never heard ? . . .  
So simple, so heart-solacing,  
Within the wood the singing bird !

In summer-time the bird grows fond,  
And weds with her he loves alway.  
How sweet the token of his bond  
Within the wood the nest a-sway !

In misty autumn-time his tune  
Falls mute . . . ere chilly winds may blast.  
Alas ! how death must seem a boon  
When in the wood he breathes his last !

ELLE était belle, si la Nuit  
 Qui dort dans la sombre chapelle  
 Où Michel-Ange a fait son lit,  
 Immobile peut être belle.

Elle était bonne, s'il suffit  
 Qu'en passant la main s'ouvre et donne,  
 Sans que Dieu n'ait rien vu, rien dit ;  
 Si l'or sans pitié fait l'aumône.

Elle pensait, si le vain bruit  
 D'une voix douce et cadencée,  
 Comme le ruisseau qui gémit,  
 Peut faire croire à la pensée.

Elle priait, si deux beaux yeux,  
 Tantôt s'attachant à la terre,  
 Tantôt se levant vers les cieux,  
 Peuvent s'appeler la prière.

Elle aurait souri, si la fleur  
 Qui ne s'est point épanouie  
 Pouvait s'ouvrir à la fraîcheur  
 Du vent qui passe et qui l'oublie.

Elle aurait pleuré, si sa main,  
 Sur son cœur froidement posée,  
 Eût jamais dans l'argile humain  
 Senti la céleste rosée.

XLIX

◇ ON A DEAD WOMAN ◇

LOVELY she was, if so you deem  
 Pale Night in San Lorenzo's shrine,  
 Where motionless she lies a-dream  
 As carven by the Florentine:

And she was kind, if but to spill  
 A casual alms be deemed enough,  
 Unheeding whether God so will,  
 Untouched by any human love.

She thought, if truly thought impel  
 A gentle voice in rhythmic tones,  
 If thought indeed be audible  
 In brooks that murmur on the stones.

She prayed indeed, if two bland eyes  
 In all their beauty earthward bent,  
 And then uplifted to the skies,  
 Be proof of a fair penitent.

She might have smiled, if the shy face  
 Of the still hidden flower might cast  
 Her sheath aside at the embrace  
 Of the chill wind that hurries past.

She might have wept for her own weal,  
 If her white hand that lay so frore  
 Over her human clay could feel  
 The dews of heaven at the core.

Elle aurait aimé, si l'orgueil,  
Pareil à la lampe inutile  
Qu'on allume près d'un cercueil,  
N'eût veillé sur son cœur stérile.

Elle est morte et n'a point vécu.  
Elle faisait semblant de vivre.  
De ses mains est tombé le livre  
Dans lequel elle n'a rien lu.

ALFRED DE MUSSET

She loved, if the vain lamp of pride  
    Within the tomb avail to bring  
Back to a body that has died  
    One throb of the forgotten spring.

This woman has not lived at all,  
    But worn life's mask. She's dead indeed,  
And from her hand she has let fall  
    The book wherein she could not read.

QUAND je mourrai, que l'on me mette,  
 Avant de clouer mon cercueil,  
 Un peu de rouge à la pommette,  
 Un peu de noir au bord de l'œil.

Car je veux, dans ma bière close,  
 Comme le soir de son aveu,  
 Rester éternellement rose  
 Avec du kh'ol sous mon œil bleu.

Pas de suaire en toile fine,  
 Mais drapez-moi dans les plis blancs  
 De ma robe de mousseline,  
 De ma robe à treize volants.

C'est ma parure préférée,  
 Je la portais quand je lui plus.  
 Son premier regard l'a sacrée,  
 Et depuis je ne la mis plus.

Posez-moi, sans jaune immortelle,  
 Sans coussin de larmes brodé,  
 Sur mon oreiller de dentelle  
 De ma chevelure inondé.

Cet oreiller, dans les nuit folles,  
 A vu dormir nos fronts unis,  
 Et sous le drap noir des gondoles  
 Compté nos baisers infinis.



WHEN I am dead and shrouded lie,  
 Before the nails are driven in  
 Draw the dark circle round each eye  
 And paint with rouge my pallid skin.

For I within my bier would be  
 As on that night he came to woo,  
 With rose-red cheeks eternally  
 And kohl beneath each eye of blue.

I want no linen shroud. For me  
 Bring out my muslin gown instead,  
 With thirteen flounces. I would be  
 Just as he loved me, lying dead.

That will I wear at last once more ;  
 Then wrap me in its white unstained.  
 His eyes once hallowed it. Therefore  
 So long I kept it unprofaned.

Bring me no fadeless wreath nor bear  
 Me broidered cushions. But set free  
 My golden tresses as it were  
 A water that was drowning me.

There once our locks in sleep would blend ;  
 The sombre sails have flapt above,  
 While our wild lips would madly spend  
 The coffers of uncounted love.

Entre mes mains de cire pâle,  
Que la prière réunit,  
Tournez ce chapelet d'opale,  
Par le pape à Rome bénit :

Je l'égrènerai dans la couche  
D'où nul encor ne s'est levé ;  
Sa bouche en a dit sur ma bouche  
Chaque *Pater* et chaque *Avé*.

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

Cross my two hands as though in hope  
Of heaven I prayed. Set there at need  
This rosary the Holy Pope  
Himself has blest through every bead.

I'll count them there as I lie dead  
Through the long night and never wake ;  
His mouth upon my mouth has said  
*Pater* and *Ave* for my sake.



## Part Two



*FOR us the banjo was a lyre  
Long years ago. A muse of fire*

*Was burning in the merry soul  
That hid behind a face of coal.*

*Now are the banjo-strings all dumb  
And Darkies gone to Kingdom Come.*

*Their bones are dust. On old Time's bent  
Sharp knee the tambourine is rent,*

*And his hot feet made wroth with gout  
Have worn their golden slippers out.*

*What then is left of all the joys  
That we delighted in as boys?*

*Love of the Muse and the old skill  
Of comic art delight us still,*

*And happier each, if in the pit  
The old friend with the old friend sit,*

*Finding a joy that cannot stale  
Until we two Sandgrounders fail,*

*And soft on Columbine and Clown  
Old Time shall ring the curtain down.*

◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇  
**P**AN d'Arcadie, aux pieds de chèvre, au front armé

De deux cornes, bruyant et des pasteurs aimé,  
 Dès que l'aube a doré la montagne et la plaine,  
 Emplit les verts roseaux d'une amoureuse haleine.  
 Vagabond, il se plaît aux jeux, aux chœurs dansants  
 Des nymphes, sur la mousse et les gazons naissants.  
 La peau du lynx revêt son dos ; sa tête est ceinte  
 De l'agreste safran, de la molle hyacinthe ;  
 Et d'un rire sonore il éveille les bois.  
 Les nymphes aux pieds nus accourent à sa voix,  
 Et légères, auprès des fontaines limpides,  
 Elles entourent Pan de leurs rondes rapides.  
 Dans les grottes de pampre, aux creux des antres  
 frais,

Le long des cours d'eau vive échappés des forêts,  
 Sous le dôme touffu des épaisses yeuses,  
 Le dieu fuit de midi les ardeurs radieuses ;  
 Il s'endort, et les bois respectant son sommeil,  
 Gardent le divin Pan des flèches du soleil.  
 Mais sitôt que la nuit, calme et ceinte d'étoiles,  
 Déploie aux cieux muets les longs plis de ses voiles,  
 Pan, d'amour enflammé, dans les bois familiers,  
 Poursuit la vierge errante à l'ombre des halliers ;  
 La saisit au passage ; et, transporté de joie,  
 Aux clartés de la lune il emporte sa proie.

LECONTE DE LISLE



◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇  
GOAT-FOOTED, horny-browed, Arcadian Pan,  
Loud-voiced and loved of all the pastoral clan,  
Soon as the dawnlight glows on hill and vale  
Through the slim reeds breathes out his amorous tale.  
Spurred by his frolic fancy, he will lead  
The dancing nymphs along the grassy mead.  
Wrapt in a wolfskin, on his head the God  
Shows saffron and wild hyacinth a-nod.  
The dull woods wake at his loud laugh, and all  
The barefoot nymphs come running to his call,  
And where the fountains sparkle hold Pan in  
The dizzy circles that their light feet spin.  
In vineclad caverns, where green tunnels yawn  
Above clear rivulets from woodlands drawn,  
Beneath the dome of dusky oaks he'll shun  
The ardent onset of the noonday sun.  
The branches shield him from the Archer's bow  
While Pan their guardian slumbers on below.  
But soon as night star-girdled loosens all  
Her lovely veils till fold on fold they fall,  
Pan, hot with love, goes lurking to waylay  
The virgin in the shadowy woods astray,  
Leaps on her path, and, laughing to the moon,  
Bears her away to be his wild love's boon.

TEL qu'un morne animal, meurtri, plein de  
poussière,  
La chaîne au cou, hurlant au chaud soleil d'été,  
Promène qui voudra son cœur ensanglanté  
Sur ton pavé cynique, ô plèbe carnassière !

Pour mettre un feu stérile en ton œil hébété,  
Pour mendier ton rire ou ta pitié grossière,  
Déchire qui voudra la robe de lumière  
De la pudeur divine et de la volupté.

Dans mon orgueil muet, dans ma tombe sans gloire,  
Dussé-je m'engloutir pour l'éternité noire,  
Je ne te vendrai pas mon ivresse ou mon mal,

Je ne livrerai pas ma vie à tes huées,  
Je ne danserai pas sur ton tréteau banal  
Avec tes histrions et tes prostituées.

LECONTE DE LISLE

I WILL not be a beast to whine and beat  
Against the bars. But those who will may thus  
Draw the mob's eyes to watch the murderous  
Wounds of the heart that are to them as meat.  
I will not bare my body of the sheet  
Of shame that wraps it for the perilous  
Praise of the lewd to set their infamous  
Dull eyes aflame again with sterile heat.

Though to a nameless tomb Time bear me down,  
My silence in eternal silence shut,  
I will not sell to thee my shames and sores,  
Nor barter heart-throbs for a cheap renown,  
Nor dance within thy vulgar booth, nor strut,  
O world! beside thy mummers and thy whores.

MIDI, roi des étés, épandu sur la plaine,  
Tombe en nappes d'argent des hauteurs du  
ciel bleu.

Tout se tait. L'air flamboie et brûle sans haleine ;  
La terre est assoupie en sa robe de feu.

L'étendue est immense, et les champs n'ont point  
d'ombre,

Et la source est tarie où buvaient les troupeaux ;  
La lointaine forêt, dont la lisière est sombre,  
Dort là-bas, immobile, en un pesant repos.

Seuls, les grands blés mûris, tels qu'une mer dorée,  
Se déroulent au loin, dédaigneux du sommeil ;  
Pacifiques enfants de la terre sacrée,  
Ils épuisent sans peur la coupe du soleil.

Parfois, comme un soupir de leur âme brûlante,  
Du sein des épis lourds qui murmurent entre eux,  
Une ondulation majestueuse et lente  
S'éveille, et va mourir à l'horizon poudreux.

Non loin, quelques bœufs blancs, couchés parmi les  
herbes,  
Bavent avec lenteur sur leurs fanons épais,  
Et suivent de leurs yeux languissants et superbes  
Le songe intérieur qu'ils n'achèvent jamais.

NOON, with all summer for kingdom, throws  
over the plain

Swathings of silver that now from the zenith down  
beat.

Now is the air all dumbfounded with fiery rain ;  
Earth in her flame-woven vesture is drowsy with  
heat.

Far, far away are the fields with no shadowy blur ;  
Dry is the spring that once ran, a cool boon for  
the kine ;

Far, far away looms the dark of the woods without stir  
Where in a leaden deep slumber the branches recline.

Only, an ocean of gold, there are waves on the wheat ;  
Scornful of slumber, they roll like a tide without  
shore,

Drinking undaunted the cup of the sun. They are  
sweet

Children of earth unprofaned and at peace ever-  
more.

Now, like a sigh from their fiery souls, on the deep  
Bosom of sibilant wheat-ears, one voice on the vast,  
Slow and majestic a wave rises up from its sleep  
Only to die on the dusty horizon at last.

White on the grass are the oxen, all heavily lapp'd,  
Dribbling their dew slowly downward ; serenely  
they lie

Gazing afar from proud eyes in a languor enrapt  
After the dream self-begotten that ever goes by.

Homme, si, le cœur plein de joie ou d'amertume,  
Tu passais vers midi dans les champs radieux,  
Fuis ! la nature est vide et le soleil consume :  
Rien n'est vivant ici, rien n'est triste ou joyeux.

Mais si, désabusé des larmes et du rire,  
Altéré de l'oubli de ce monde agité,  
Tu veux, ne sachant plus pardonner ou maudire,  
Goûter une suprême et morne volupté,

Viens ! Le soleil te parle en paroles sublimes ;  
Dans sa flamme implacable absorbe-toi sans fin ;  
Et retourne à pas lents vers les cités infimes,  
Le cœur trempé sept fois dans le néant divin.

LECONTE DE LISLE

Man, be thou happy or grievous and bitter thy doom,  
If by these radiant meadows thou farest, begone !  
Nature is empty, the sun is a flame to consume :  
Nothing here lives, joy and sorrow are even as one.

But, if thy laughter and tears be put by, and thou  
thirst

Only to drink of the cup that bids memory cease,  
Careless of all things behind thee, forgiven or curst,  
Tasting of sorrow there blended with uttermost  
peace,

Hear the sun's message sublime ! In implacable flame  
Purge thou thy heart seven times of all sterile desire,  
Ere thou return with slow feet to thy cities of shame,  
Tempered anew in his holy negation of fire.

## ◇ LE PARFUM IMPÉRISSABLE ◇

QUAND la fleur du soleil, la rose de Lahor,  
 De son âme odorante a rempli goutte à goutte  
 La fiole d'argile ou de cristal ou d'or,  
 Sur le sable qui brûle on peut l'épandre toute.

Les fleuves et la mer inonderaient en vain  
 Ce sanctuaire étroit qui la tint enfermée :  
 Il garde en se brisant son arôme divin,  
 Et sa poussière heureuse en reste parfumée.

Puisque par la blessure ouverte de mon cœur  
 Tu t'écoules de même, ô celeste liqueur,  
 Inexprimable amour, qui m'enflammais pour elle !

Qu'il lui soit pardonné, que mon mal soit béni !  
 Par delà l'heure humaine et le temps infini  
 Mon cœur est embaumé d'une odeur immortelle !

LECONTE DE LISLE



## ◇ THE IMPERISHABLE PERFUME ◇

THE rose of Ind, the sun's own flower, that hath  
To clay or golden vessel given its freight  
Of fragrance drop by drop, henceforth no bath  
Of sea or river shall obliterate.

Rend thou the vase and scatter it like seed

On burning sands ; there shall the dusty core  
Of sacred odour from its prison freed

Dwell uncontaminate for evermore.

And since my wounded heart doth bear the flood

Of thy hot tide, O Love, translate the pain  
That I do suffer to a lasting good :

Forgive her. Let the dust of me remain  
Beyond Time's sound or murmur of men's feet,  
A redolence immortal and most sweet.

L'À-BAS, sur la mer, comme l'hirondelle,  
 Je voudrais m'enfuir, et plus loin encore !  
 Mais j'ai beau vouloir, puisque la cruelle  
 A lié mon cœur avec trois fils d'or.

L'un est son regard, l'autre son sourire,  
 Le troisième, enfin, est sa lèvre en fleur ;  
 Mais je l'aime trop, c'est un vrai martyre :  
 Avec trois fils d'or elle a pris mon cœur !

Oh, si je pouvais dénouer ma chaîne !  
 Adieu, pleurs, tourments ; je prendrais l'essor.  
 Mais non, non ! mieux vaut mourir à la peine  
 Que de vous briser, ô mes trois fils d'or !

LECONTE DE LISLE

## ◇ THREE GOLDEN THREADS ◇

LIKE a swallow I'd fly and leave my love  
Forgotten beyond the sea ;  
But with cruel threads that are golden-wove  
She holdeth the heart of me.

One is her look and two her smile  
And three is her mouth so red ;  
And I dare not strain for a single mile  
Or tighten her threefold thread.

I would I might break their bonds and fly,  
And so with my grief have done.  
Ah, no ! for these three I would sooner die  
Than sever a single one !

LA nature est un temple où de vivants piliers  
Laisent parfois sortir de confuses paroles ;  
L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles  
Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.

Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent  
Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,  
Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,  
Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.

Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfants,  
Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies,  
—Et d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants,

Ayant l'expansion des choses infinies,  
Comme l'ambre, le musc, le benjoin et l'encens,  
Qui chantent les transports de l'esprit et des sens.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

**I**N Nature's shrine confusèd speech doth stir  
 Among her vibrant columns ; man doth tread  
 Where forests of strange symbols still unread  
 With their bland looks behold the wayfarer.  
 As moaning echoes that in distance blur  
 And in wide aisles of cloudy rumour wed,  
 So, vast as darkness or as light, is spread  
 The speech whereby scent, sound, and hue confer.

Some scents are chill as infants' flesh, a draft  
 Breathed on an oboe, green of a green blade ;  
 Others will in their reeky triumph waft  
 A wind from unimaginable poles :  
 Musk, benzoin, ambergris, by each is made  
 The song of the loud rapture of men's souls.

UN ange furieux fond du ciel comme un aigle,  
Du mécréant saisit à pleins poings les cheveux,  
Et dit, le secouant : “ Tu connaîtras la règle !  
(Car je suis ton bon Ange, entends-tu ?) Je le veux !

“ Sache qu’il faut aimer, sans faire la grimace,  
Le pauvre, le méchant, le tortu, l’hébété,  
Pour que tu puisses faire à Jésus, quand il passe,  
Un tapis triomphal avec ta charité.

“ Tel est l’Amour ! Avant que ton cœur ne se blase,  
A la gloire de Dieu rallume ton extase ;  
C’est la Volupté vraie aux durables appas ! ”

Et l’Ange, châtier autant, ma foi ! qu’il aime,  
De ses poings de géant torture l’anathème ;  
Mais le damné répond toujours : “ Je ne veux pas ! ”

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

AN angel, like an eagle swept by wrath,  
 Drops earthward, plucks the sinner's hair full  
 hard,

And cries : " Thou shalt walk in a righteous path !

I will it, I who have thy soul in ward.

Know then that thou shalt love thy fellows, yea !

Knave, dolt, or misbegotten. Even thus

Thou shalt with charity make thy Lord's way,

When that He passeth by thee, glorious.

" Such is true Love. Ere thy hot blood turn chill,

Drink of the glory of God's burning grace

Wherein is a delight Time cannot kill."

And the great Angel's giant arms apace

Smite down on the damned soul's defiant face

That yet doth answer : " Nay, I never will ! "

UNE nuit que j'étais près d'une affreuse Juive,  
 Comme au long d'un cadavre un cadavre étendu,  
 Je me pris à songer près de ce corps vendu  
 A la triste beauté dont mon désir se prive.

Je me représentai sa majesté native,  
 Son regard de vigueur et de grâces armé,  
 Ses cheveux qui lui font un casque parfumé  
 Et dont le souvenir pour l'amour me ravive.

Car j'eusse avec ferveur baisé ton noble corps,  
 Et depuis tes pieds frais jusqu'à tes noires tresses  
 Déroulé le trésor des profondes caresses,

Si quelque soir, d'un pleur obtenu sans efforts  
 Tu pouvais seulement, ô reine des cruelles !  
 Obscurcir la splendeur de tes froides prunelles.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE



ONE night with a bought Jewish girl I lay  
 Like one stark corse beside another cold,  
 And pondered there beside her bartered clay  
 Of beauty's self that is nor bought nor sold.  
 I saw her in her majesty unspoiled,  
 Her fearless gaze, the graciousness of her,  
 The tresses like an odorous casket coiled  
 Whereof the memory makes my dead love stir.  
 For I had kissed thy noble body o'er  
 From head to feet and with caresses clung  
 In fervour for thy beauty, O thou whore,  
 If but upon a day there might have sprung  
 A tear of pity, thou unpitying queen,  
 To dim the cold light of thine eyeballs keen.

## ◇ ◇ LA MORT DES PAUVRES ◇ ◇

C'EST la Mort qui console, hélas ! et qui fait  
vivre ;

C'est le but de la vie, et c'est le seul espoir  
Qui, comme un élixir, nous monte et nous enivre,  
Et nous donne le cœur de marcher jusqu'au soir ;

A travers la tempête, et la neige, et le givre,  
C'est la clarté vibrante à notre horizon noir ;  
C'est l'auberge fameuse inscrite sur le livre,  
Où l'on pourra manger, et dormir, et s'asseoir ;

C'est un Ange qui tient dans ses doigts magnétiques  
Le sommeil et le don des rêves extatiques,  
Et qui refait le lit des gens pauvres et nus ;

C'est la gloire des Dieux, c'est le grenier mystique,  
C'est la bourse du pauvre et sa patrie antique,  
C'est le portique ouvert sur les Cieux inconnus !

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

## ◇ THE DEATH OF THE POOR ◇

DEATH is the only comfortable thing  
That makes us brave out life, the single hope  
That like a cordial in the drunkard's cup  
Makes us forget hard fate and heartrending.  
Through cold and mist and rain, though wavering,  
On our dark skyline still the light shines up ;  
It is the famous inn where we shall sup  
And rest at last from our hard wayfaring.

Death is the guardian angel at the door  
Of sleep with gifts of an ecstatic trance ;  
He is the mystic reaper in whose glance  
God's glory shines, beyond whose threshing-floor  
Lies all the treasure and inheritance  
Denied on earth to the enduring poor.

HOMME libre, toujours tu chériras la mer.  
La mer est ton miroir ; tu contemples ton âme  
Dans le déroulement infini de sa lame,  
Et ton esprit n'est pas un gouffre moins amer.

Tu te plais à plonger au sein de ton image ;  
Tu l'embrasses des yeux et des bras, et ton cœur  
Se distrait quelquefois de sa propre rumeur  
Au bruit de cette plainte indomptable et sauvage.

Vous êtes tous les deux ténébreux et discrets :  
Homme, nul n'a sondé le fond de tes abîmes ;  
O mer, nul ne connaît tes richesses intimes,  
Tant vous êtes jaloux de garder vos secrets !

Et cependant voilà des siècles innombrables  
Que vous vous combattez sans pitié ni remord,  
Tellement vous aimez le carnage et la mort,  
O lutteurs éternels, ô frères implacables !

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

U<sup>N</sup>TO thy roving spirit must the ocean  
 Be ever dear, O man that dost dislimn  
 In her vast surges' never-ending motion,  
 Thy soul unfathomed, and thy bitter whim.

Her bosom is thy joy when thou art cleaving  
 Its billows ; then thine eyes, thine arms are fain,  
 And thy heart hearing its wild plaint upheaving  
 Forgets awhile the sound of its own pain.

Both in remote and shadowy ways abiding :  
 Man, who hath plumbed the deeps of thy dark soul?  
 O jealous sea, who knows what thou art hiding  
 Far from our gaze on some unfathomed shoal ?

Yet through uncounted time have ye been waging  
 An unrelenting battle, life for life,  
 O brothers in dire hatred unassuaging,  
 In lust of slaughter and eternal strife !

QUE diras-tu ce soir, pauvre âme solitaire,  
 Que diras-tu, mon cœur, cœur autrefois flétri,  
 A la très belle, à la très bonne, à la très chère,  
 Dont le regard divin t'a soudain refléuri ?

— Nous mettrons notre orgueil à chanter ses  
 louanges :

Rien ne vaut la douceur de son autorité ;  
 Sa chair spirituelle a le parfum des Anges,  
 Et son œil nous revêt d'un habit de clarté.

Que ce soit dans la nuit et dans la solitude,  
 Que ce soit dans la rue et dans la multitude,  
 Son fantôme dans l'air danse comme un flambeau.

Parfois il parle et dit : “ Je suis belle, et j'ordonne  
 Que pour l'amour de moi vous n'aimiez que le Beau ;  
 Je suis l'Ange gardien, la Muse et la Madone ! ”

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

POOR soul, what word comes from thy loneliness,  
 What word, my heart, remembering old mischance,  
 Unto that utter Beauty that can bless

Anew thy being with her godlike glance ?

“ Her do we praise with our proud melodies.

There is nought sweeter than her sacred might  
 Whose flesh is scented as an angel’s is,  
 Whose glance clothes all things in unstained light.

Whether it be in darkness where none bide

Or in the sunlit street by many trod,

Her ghost goes fluttering like a flame in air.

She saith : ‘ I, who am lovely, bid thee guide

Thy heart to follow Beauty everywhere,

I who am Angel, Muse, and Mother of God ! ’ ”

SCULPTEUR, cherche avec soin, en attendant  
l'extase,

Un marbre sans défaut pour en faire un beau vase ;  
Cherche longtemps sa forme et n'y retrace pas  
D'amours mystérieux ni de divins combats.  
Pas d'Héraklés vainqueur du monstre de Némée,  
Ni de Cypris naissant sur la mer embaumée ;  
Pas de Titans vaincus dans leurs rébellions,  
Ni de riant Bacchos attelant les lions  
Avec un frein tressé de pampres et de vignes ;  
Pas de Léda jouant dans la troupe des cygnes  
Sous l'ombre des lauriers en fleur, ni d'Artémis  
Surprise au sein des eaux dans sa blancheur de lys.  
Qu'autour du vase pur, trop beau pour la Bacchante,  
La verveine mêlée à des feuilles d'acanthé  
Fleurisse, et que plus bas des vierges lentement  
S'avancent deux à deux, d'un pas sûr et charmant,  
Les bras pendant le long de leurs tuniques droites,  
Et les cheveux tressés sur leurs têtes étroites.

THÉODORE DE BANVILLE



## ◇ ◇ SEEK OUT, O SCULPTOR ◇ ◇

SEEK out, O sculptor, ere thy hand grow hot  
 A flawless marble thou mayst shape and file  
 Into a lovely bowl ; but grave it not  
 With tales of secret passion or the guile  
 Of Gods inhuman. Chisel not the mighty  
 Prowess of Hercules nor yet the salt  
 Sea-cradled birth of Cyprian Aphrodite  
 Nor rebel Titans hurtling down the vault.  
 Avoid lewd Bacchus and his lions reined  
 With twisted vine-leaf. Set not there the stained  
 Hot Leda toying with her wild white swan  
 Under the laurels. Let no ripple kiss  
 The lily pallor of proud Artemis.  
 More lovely than all these, carve thou thereon  
 Acanthus-leaves and vervain ; let thy steel  
 Show linkèd girlhood moving like a wheel  
 Slow-drawn, two after two, about the soft  
 Sides of the bowl. On limbs upright and fallow  
 Carve the smooth robe. Let arms hang loose, and  
     hallow  
 Their dauntless brows with braided hair aloft.

**L**A blanche Vérité dort au fond d'un grand puits.  
Plus d'un fuit cet abîme ou n'y prend jamais  
garde ;

Moi, par un sombre amour, tout seul je m'y hasarde,  
J'y descends à travers la plus noire des nuits ;

Et j'entraîne le câble aussi loin que je puis ;  
Or, je l'ai déroulé jusqu'au bout : je regarde,  
Et, les bras étendus, la prunelle hagarde,  
J'oscille sans rien voir ni rencontrer d'appuis.

Elle est là cependant, je l'entends qui respire ;  
Mais, pendule éternel que sa puissance attire,  
Je passe et je repasse et tâte l'ombre en vain ;

Ne pourrai-je allonger cette corde flottante,  
Ni remonter au jour dont la gaité me tente ?  
Et dois-je dans l'horreur me balancer sans fin ?

SULLY-PRUDHOMME

WHITE Truth lies sleeping in a well deep-hewn,  
Wherefrom men fly or glance with eyes a-scare;  
I only, darkly amorous, downward dare  
On sombre quest through midnights without moon;  
I drag the long coil downward with me; soon  
The tether runs right out. I downward stare,  
With vain arms reaching on the void of air;  
Swung to and fro, I see and clasp no boon.

Yet is she yonder, for her breathings sound;  
While I, a throbbing pendulum, still grope  
Now here, now there, the plaything of her might.  
Oh, can I never stretch the coil unwound  
Nor climb back to my dayspring of lost hope,  
But swing for ever in an endless night?

TOUTES, portant l'amphore, une main sur la  
 hanche,  
 Théano, Callidie, Amymone, Agavé,  
 Esclaves d'un labeur sans cesse inachevé,  
 Courent du puits à l'urne où l'eau vaine s'épanche.

Hélas ! le grès rugueux meurtrit l'épaule blanche,  
 Et le bras faible est las du fardeau soulevé :  
 " Monstre, que nous avons nuit et jour abreuvé,  
 O gouffre, que nous veut ta soif que rien n'étanche ? "

Elles tombent, le vide épouvante leurs cœurs ;  
 Mais la plus jeune alors, moins triste que ses sœurs,  
 Chante, et leur rend la force et la persévérance.

Tels sont l'œuvre et le sort de nos illusions :  
 Elles tombent toujours, et la jeune Espérance  
 Leur dit toujours : " Mes sœurs, si nous recom-  
 mensions ! "

SULLY-PRUDHOMME

LADEN with amphoras, on toil intent  
 Come the condemnèd sisters, hand on hip,  
 And hasten to the well and lean and dip  
 To brim the bowl. The fair white skin is rent  
 Upon the shoulder, and the hand is spent  
 Holding the burden that the mouth may sip.  
 “What dost thou lack, O monster with dry lip,  
 More than these draughts interminably blent?”

Thus daunted, from their labour they recoil,  
 Dumb and despairing, save the youngest wife,  
 Who sings aloud and summons back their will :  
 So is our fond illusion’s endless toil  
 Thwarted for ever, and young Hope sings : “Life !  
 Lean down and dip thine amphora and fill.”

DE l'éternel Azur la sereine ironie  
 Accable, belle indolemment comme les fleurs,  
 Le poète impuissant qui maudit son génie  
 A travers un désert stérile de Douleurs.

Fuyant, les yeux fermés, je le sens qui regarde,  
 Avec l'intensité d'un remords atterrant,  
 Mon âme vide. Où fuir ? Et quelle nuit hagarde  
 Jeter, lambeaux, jeter sur ce mépris navrant ?

Brouillards, montez ! Versez vos cendres monotones  
 Avec de longs haillons de brume dans les cieux  
 Qui noiera le marais livide des automnes,  
 Et bâtissez un grand plafond silencieux !

Et toi, sors des étangs léthéens et ramasse  
 En t'en venant la vase et les pâles roseaux,  
 Cher Ennui, pour boucher d'une main jamais lasse  
 Les grands trous bleus que font méchamment les  
 oiseaux.

STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ

THE eternal Blue, remote, serene, unkind,  
O'erwhelms with beauty as of idle flowers  
The poet groping with his weight of mind  
Through arid wastes of unassuaged hours.

Waif, with shut eyes I feel the piercing look  
Of its keen eye strike down my soul's void space.  
Where shall I fly? How foil the sharp rebuke  
In darkness un beholden of its face?

Rise, mists! Pour out your slow, sad, ashen breath!  
With rags of haze festoon the skiey roof  
To o'erbrim the marsh where Autumn loitereth;  
And rear a throne of silence far aloof.

And thou, dear Grief, from pools of Lethe's tide  
Steal out and pluck the ooze-filled rush's blade,  
With hand unwearied weave a veil to hide  
The huge blue rents the heartless birds have made.

CES nymphes, je les veux perpétuer.

Si clair,  
Leur incarnat léger, qu'il voltige dans l'air  
Assoupi de sommeils touffus.

Aimai-je un rêve ?

Mon doute, amas de nuit ancienne, s'achève  
En maint rameau subtil, qui, demeuré les vrais  
Bois mêmes, prouve, hélas ! que bien seul je m'offrais  
Pour triomphe la faute idéale des roses—

Réfléchissons . . .

ou si les femmes dont tu gloses  
Figurent un souhait de tes sens fabuleux !  
Faune, l'illusion s'échappe des yeux bleus  
Et froids, comme une source en pleurs, de la plus  
chaste :

Mais, l'autre tout soupirs, dis-tu qu'elle contraste  
Comme brise du jour chaude dans ta toison ?  
Que non ! par l'immobile et lasse pâmoison  
Suffoquant de chaleurs le matin frais s'il lutte,  
Ne murmure point d'eau que ne verse ma flûte  
Au bosquet arrosé d'accords ; et le seul vent  
Hors des deux tuyaux prompt à s'exhaler avant  
Qu'il disperse le son dans une pluie aride,  
C'est, à l'horizon pas remué d'une ride,  
Le visible et serein souffle artificiel  
De l'inspiration, qui regagne le ciel.

STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ



I WOULD perpetuate these nymphs, the swift  
 Translucent flesh set drowsily adrift  
 Like down in air. Loved I Love's counterfeit ?  
 My doubts, begotten of the long night's heat,  
 Dislimn the woodland till my triumph shows  
 As the flawed shadow of a frustrate rose.  
 Yet pause and think. . . . Were these fair women but  
 A flood of sensual fancy thou wouldst glut !  
 Their blue eyes spill illusion like the flow  
 Of weeping runnels that forsake their snow.  
 That other, now, all sighs . . . does she release  
 A summer wind to fondle thy warm fleece ?  
 Nay ! through the hushed imponderable hours  
 That stifle the young day, no sound of showers  
 Is heard save only the bright drops I blow  
 To drench the branches that I pipe below ;  
 No wind is there save what my flute gives out  
 In arid rain swift-ebbing on the drought.  
 Only along the horizon's flawless hue  
 Floats the frail breath that once the piper blew,  
 Serene and visible, his kindled flame  
 Drawn up to the far heaven whence it came.

VERS Thémiscyre en feu qui tout le jour trembla  
 Des clameurs et du choc de la cavalerie,  
 Dans l'ombre, morne et lent, le Thermodon charrie  
 Cadavres, armes, chars que la mort y roula.

Où sont Phœbé, Marpé, Philippis, Aella,  
 Qui, suivant Hippolyte et l'ardente Astérie,  
 Menèrent l'escadron royal à la tuerie ?  
 Leurs corps déchevelés et blêmes gisaient là.

Telle une floraison de lis géants fauchée,  
 La rive est aux deux bords de guerrières jonchée,  
 Où parfois se débat et hennit un cheval ;

Et l'Euxin vit, à l'aube, aux plus lointaines berges  
 Du fleuve ensanglanté d'amont jusqu'en aval,  
 Fuir les étalons blancs, rouges du sang des Vierges.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA

TOWARDS Themiscyra that the dreadful din  
Of rampant horse and the loud battle-roar  
Hath shaken, darkly Thermodon doth pour  
With corse and chariot drownèd deep therein.  
Where now are all the Amazonian kin  
Of brave Hippolyta that went before  
The royal squadron to the slaughter? Frore  
In bloody whirlpools of the stream they spin.

Like giant lilies that the scythe hath mown  
The bank is thick with warrior-women strown ;  
Strayed chargers trample them with none to hold,  
While from the borders of the Euxine Sea  
Far inland now the wild white stallions flee,  
Red with the blood of virgins that lie cold.

## ◇ LE RAVISSEMENT D'ANDROMÈDE ◇

D'UN vol silencieux, le grand Cheval ailé,  
Soufflant de ses naseaux élargis l'air qui fume,  
Les emporte avec un frémissement de plume  
A travers la nuit bleue et l'éther étoilé.

Ils vont. L'Afrique plonge au gouffre flagellé,  
Puis l'Asie . . . un désert . . . le Liban ceint de  
brume . . .

Et voici qu'apparaît, toute blanche d'écume,  
La mer mystérieuse où vint sombrer Hellé.

Et le vent gonfle ainsi que deux immenses voiles  
Les ailes qui, volant d'étoiles en étoiles,  
Aux amants enlacés font un tiède berceau ;

Tandis que, l'œil au ciel où palpite leur ombre,  
Ils voient, irradiant du Bélier au Verseau,  
Leurs Constellations poindre dans l'azur sombre.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA

## ◇ THE RAPE OF ANDROMEDA ◇

**W**ITH nostrils wide that fill the air with fume  
 The huge horse bears them in a soundless flight  
 With throbbing of his monstrous wings that smite  
 Thro' starry ether and blue dusk. The gloom  
 Shows Afric foundering in their wake. There loom  
 The Asian towns . . . here desert . . . there the  
 height  
 Of fogbound Lebanon . . . and here, foam-white,  
 The sea that sucked down Hellë to her doom.

Between the threshing of vast wings blown wide  
 Like bellying sails, from star to star they flee  
 In the warm wash of the aërial sea ;  
 While gazing heavenward where their shadows glide,  
 From Ram to Waterer lo ! irradiantly  
 Their constellations in the azure ride.

EN tous lieux, même au pied des autels que  
j'embrasse,  
Je la vois qui m'appelle et m'ouvre ses bras blancs.  
O père vénérable, ô mère dont les flancs  
M'ont porté, suis-je né d'une exécration ?

L'Eumolpide vengeur n'a point dans Samothrace  
Secoué vers le seuil les longs manteaux sanglants,  
Et, malgré moi, je fuis, le cœur las, les pieds lents ;  
J'entends les chiens sacrés qui hurlent sur ma trace.

Partout je sens, j'aspire, à moi-même odieux,  
Les noirs enchantements et les sinistres charmes  
Dont m'enveloppe encor la colère des Dieux ;

Car les grands Dieux ont fait d'irrésistibles armes  
De sa bouche enivrante et de ses sombres yeux,  
Pour armer contre moi ses baisers et ses larmes.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA

ME her pale arms, her voice calamitous  
Pursue even to the shrine. O father dear,  
O mother that once bore me, didst thou rear  
A thing foul-blooded and most infamous ?  
Not now in Samothrace the avenger thus  
Doth threaten thy dear threshold, and draw near  
With red robes shaken. Yet the hell-hounds leer  
And at my leaden feet grow clamorous.

I am wrapt within a cloud of hate. I smell  
A reek of sorceries on the fatal air  
Whereby the angry Gods will drag me down  
Who have made them weapons irresistible  
Of her soft mouth and her sad eyes a-stare,  
Her kiss that stabs me and her tears that drown.

LE semoir, la charrue, un joug, des socs luisants,  
La herse, l'aiguillon et la faux acérée  
Qui fauchait en un jour les épis d'une airée,  
Et la fourche qui tend la gerbe aux paysans ;

Ces outils familiers, aujourd'hui trop pesants,  
Le vieux Parmi les voue à l'immortelle Rhée  
Par qui le germe éclôt sous la terre sacrée.  
Pour lui, sa tâche est faite ; il a quatre-vingts ans.

Près d'un siècle, au soleil, sans en être plus riche,  
Il a poussé le coutre au travers de la friche ;  
Ayant vécu sans joie, il vieillit sans remords.

Mais il est las d'avoir tant peiné sur la glèbe  
Et songe que peut-être il faudra, chez les morts,  
Labourer des champs d'ombre arrosés par l'Érèbe.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA



HERE is the yoke, with harrow and share near by,  
The goad, the scythe that in a day hath mown  
Swathes that would make the wide barn-flooring  
groan,

And here the fork the brown haymakers ply.

Too heavy tools ! He hath vowed them utterly

Unto immortal Rhea, who alone

Brings seed to blossom from hard tilth. His own  
Labour is done and he not loth to die.

Fourscore long years, sun-blistered, poor, he drave  
The coulter, without mirth, through stubborn soil,  
Who now goes grimly onward to the grave.

Yet he bewails the labour too long borne,

And dreads to find more fallow for his toil

In sunless fields of Erebus forlorn.

AU pommeau de l'épée on lit : “ Calixte Pape.”  
 La tiare, les clefs, la barque et le tramail  
 Blasonnent, en reliefs d'un somptueux travail,  
 Le bœuf héréditaire armoyé sur la chape.

A la fusée un Dieu païen, Faune ou Priape,  
 Rit, engainé d'un lierre à graines de corail ;  
 Et l'éclat du métal s'exalte sous l'émail  
 Si clair, que l'estoc brille encor plus qu'il ne frappe.

Maître Antonio Perez de Las Cellas forgea  
 Ce bâton pastoral pour le premier Borja,  
 Comme s'il pressentait sa fameuse lignée ;

Et ce glaive dit mieux qu'Arioste ou Sannazar,  
 Par l'acier de sa lame et l'or de sa poignée,  
 Le pontife Alexandre et le prince César.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA

◇ ◇ ◇ THE DAGGER ◇ ◇ ◇

THE pommel reads : " Calixtus Pope." The mitre,  
 The keys, the boat, and netting for the draft  
 Are graven on the shield ; and, cut with craft,  
 The crested bull, the token of the fighter,  
 Ramps on the sheath. The fingers of the smiter  
 Folded on ivy-garlands thick engrafted  
 With beads of coral where a satyr laughed ;  
 And the bright blade with every blow shone brighter.

Messer Antonio, when he forged this grim  
 Pastoral wand for the first Borgia's whim,  
 His fatal dynasty foresaw. Gold hilt  
 To steely tip is loud with all the weird  
 Innumerable whispers of the guilt  
 Of Roderigo and the whelp he reared.

S EIGNEUR DE RIMINI, Vicaire et Podestà,  
 Son profil d'épervier vit, s'accuse ou recule  
 A la lueur d'airain d'un fauve crépuscule,  
 Dans l'orbe où Matteo de' Pastis l'incrusta.  
 Or, de tous les tyrans qu'un peuple détesta,  
 Nul, comte, marquis, duc, prince ou principule,  
 Qu'il ait nom Ezzelin, Can, Galéas, Hercule,  
 Ne fut maître si fier que le Malatesta.

Celui-ci, le meilleur, ce Sigismond Pandolphe,  
 Mit à sang la Romagne et la Marche et le Golfe,  
 Bâtit un temple, fit l'amour et le chanta ;  
 Et leurs femmes aussi sont rudes et sévères,  
 Car sur le même bronze où sourit Isotta,  
 L'Éléphant triomphal foule des primevères.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA

VICAR and Podestà, of Rimini Lord,  
 His hawk's profile peers out and then is lost  
 On brass in lustre like the sun's dim ghost  
 Where once Mattèo set him. Of all the abhorred  
 Tyrants that ere spread terror by the sword  
 Not king nor count nor whosoe'er won most  
 Of high-renownèd infamy could boast  
 Pride like these Malatestas', iron-cored.

This Sigismund, their best, slew all the men  
 Within Romagna by seaboard or fen,  
 Reared him a temple, loved and sang his want ;  
 They had rock-hearted wives. This same bronze  
     shows  
 Isolda glad to see the Elephant  
 Tread down the younglings of the April rose.

## ◇ LE RÉCIF DE CORAIL ◇

LE soleil sous la mer, mystérieuse aurore,  
Éclaire la forêt des coraux Abyssins  
Qui mêle, aux profondeurs de ses tièdes bassins,  
La bête épanouie et la vivante flore.

Et tout ce que le sel ou l'iode colore,  
Mousse, algue chevelue, anémones, oursins,  
Couvre de pourpre sombre, en somptueux dessins,  
Le fond vermiculé du pâle madrépore.

De sa splendide écaille éteignant les émaux  
Un grand poisson navigue à travers les rameaux ;  
Dans l'ombre transparente indolemment il rôde ;

Et brusquement, d'un coup de sa nageoire en feu,  
Il fait, par le cristal morne, immobile et bleu,  
Courir un frisson d'or, de nacre et d'émeraude.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA

DEEPER than plummets sound the sunbeams  
    smite  
Under the sea, and coral-forests fuse  
Thro' their dim basins that the warm wave strews  
With petall'd beast and pulsing bud. Sea-mite,  
Moss, fern, or flower, by iodine made bright  
Or the rank brine, glow now with dawn's own hues  
And dapple with dark purples that suffuse  
The barr'd root of pale madrepora. The might  
  
Of yonder monster thwart the frondage flings  
His scaly splendour. Lazily adrift,  
He prowls in lucent dusk. And now he swings  
His fin round like a sudden torch, and rings  
The sullen crystal's stilly blue with swift  
Golden and pearl and emerald shudderings.

PAR quels froids Océans, depuis combien d'hivers,  
—Qui le saura jamais, Conque frêle et nacrée !—  
La houle, les courants et les raz de marée  
T'ont-ils roulée au creux de leurs abîmes verts ?

Aujourd'hui, sous le ciel, loin des reflux amers,  
Tu t'es fait un doux lit de l'arène dorée.  
Mais ton espoir est vain. Longue et désespérée,  
En toi gémit toujours la grande voix des mers.

Mon âme est devenue une prison sonore :  
Et comme en tes replis pleure et soupire encore  
La plainte du refrain de l'ancienne clameur,

Ainsi du plus profond de ce cœur trop plein d'Elle,  
Sourde, lente, insensible et pourtant éternelle,  
Gronde en moi l'orageuse et lointaine rumeur.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA



BY what chill oceans, through what Yules a-  
freeze—

What man may know, O frail and pearly shell !—

Hath tide, swift eddy, or the full sea-swell

Held thee a-sway in green profundities ?

Now on smooth sand, far from the reflux seas,

Within thee still, whate'er thy vain hope tell,

The rumour of the sea is voluble

And the long roar of her loud agonies.

Now my shut soul moans loud within the gate :

As in thy whorls the clamour doth abide

Of the old sorrow still disconsolate,

So in my heart, that doth Her memory hide,

Still moans the wroth, unstemmed, inveterate

Rumour of storm on that remoter tide.

VOTRE âme est un paysage choisi  
Que vont charmant masques et bergamasques  
Jouant du luth et dansant et quasi  
Tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques.

Tout en chantant sur le mode mineur  
L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune,  
Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire à leur bonheur  
Et leur chanson se mêle au clair de lune,

Au calme clair de lune triste et beau,  
Qui fait rêver les oiseaux dans les arbres  
Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau,  
Les grands jets d'eau sveltes parmi les marbres.

PAUL VERLAINE

YOUR soul's a happy pastoral where trimly  
The lawns are kept and merry dancers go  
To melody of lutes, still wondering dimly  
Behind their masks if they are happy so.

And happy life that hath sweet love for guerdon  
They praise in sad notes of the minor scale,  
But with wry faces that belie the burden  
That melts away into the moonlight pale.

And the calm moonbeams fill the birds a-sleeping  
With silver dreams, and the tall fountains spear  
The dusk with silver jets that fall a-weeping  
On marble basins for a bliss too dear.

LES donneurs de sérénades  
Et les belles écouteuses  
Échangent des propos fades  
Sous les ramures chanteuses.

C'est Tircis et c'est Aminte,  
Et c'est l'éternel Clitandre,  
Et c'est Damis qui pour mainte  
Cruelle fait maint vers tendre.

Leurs courtes vestes de soie,  
Leurs longues robes à queues,  
Leur élégance, leur joie  
Et leurs molles ombres bleues

Tourbillonnent dans l'extase  
D'une lune rose et grise,  
Et la mandoline jase  
Parmi les frissons de brise.

PAUL VERLAINE

## ◇ ◇ M A S Q U E R A D E ◇ ◇

THE serenaders woo with hymns  
 Fair listeners with lips not slow  
 To fan awhile their foolish whims  
 Beneath the boughs they sing below.

Tircis is there, Aminta there ;  
 Clitander's ardour none can quell ;  
 And Damis for the cruel fair  
 Has many a wanton song to sell.

Their silken vests, the slender girth  
 Of trailing gowns that sweep and sway,  
 Their elegance, their wanton mirth,  
 Their shadows moving lithe as they,

Are eddies all in rapture spun  
 Up to the moon as upward spins  
 Through trembling air the music won  
 From out the stricken mandolins.

PARSIFAL a vaincu les Filles, leur gentil  
 Babil et la luxure amusante—et sa pente  
 Vers la Chair de garçon vierge que cela tente  
 D'aimer les seins légers et ce gentil babil.

Il a vaincu la Femme belle, au cœur subtil,  
 Étalant ses bras frais et sa gorge excitante ;  
 Il a vaincu l'Enfer et rentre sous la tente  
 Avec un lourd trophée à son bras puéril,

Avec la lance qui perça le Flanc suprême !  
 Il a guéri le roi, le voici roi lui-même  
 Et prêtre du très saint Trésor essentiel.

En robe d'or il adore, gloire et symbole,  
 Le vase pur où resplendit le sang réel.  
 —Et, ô ces voix d'enfants chantant dans la  
 coupole !

PAUL VERLAINE

HE hath foiled the Wantons, their soft lips have  
failed

To snare his valour ; he hath made as stone  
His virginal boy's body ever prone  
To love lewd mirth and the light breasts unveiled ;  
He hath foiled Fair Woman who with guile assailed,  
Proffering her arms and bosom for his throne ;  
He hath conquered Hell, and now, his battle done,  
Comes to his tent, the heavy trophy trailed

From his young hold. It is the sword that slew  
God's self ! He hath healed the king, and lo ! he too  
Is king and priest of the most holy food.  
Vestured in gold his fervour doth exalt  
The sign and glory of the chalic'd Blood.—  
Hark to the children's voices in the vault !

AYANT poussé la porte étroite qui chancelle,  
Je me suis promené dans le petit jardin  
Qu'éclairait doucement le soleil du matin,  
Pailletant chaque fleur d'une humide étincelle.

Rien n'a changé. J'ai tout revu : l'humble tonnelle  
De vigne folle avec les chaises de rotin . . .  
Le jet d'eau fait toujours son murmure argentin  
Et le vieux tremble sa plainte sempiternelle.

Les roses comme avant palpitent ; comme avant,  
Les grands lys orgueilleux se balancent au vent.  
Chaque alouette qui va et vient m'est connue.

Même j'ai retrouvé debout la Velléda  
Dont le plâtre s'écaille au bout de l'avenue,  
— Grêle, parmi l'odeur fade du réséda.

PAUL VERLAINE



I PUSHED the gate that swung to silently,  
And I was in the garden and aware  
Of early daylight on the flowers there  
And cups of dew sun-kindled. I could see  
Nothing was changed from what it used to be.  
There was the wild-vine arbour, the old chair,  
The fountain singing silverly in air,  
The eternal sigh of the old aspen-tree.

And still the rose is fluttering ; as before  
The tall, proud lily sways in the warm breeze ;  
I know the very larks that sink or soar ;  
And even the statue, frail amid her trees,  
With plaster crumbling on the grassy floor,  
Shines amid shadows of dead fragrances.

LES premières amours sont des essais d'amour,  
 Ce sont les feux légers, les passagères fêtes  
 De cœurs encor confus et d'âmes imparfaites,  
 Où commence à frémir un éveil vague et court.

Pour connaître l'amour suprême et sans retour,  
 Il faut des cœurs surgis de leurs propres défaites,  
 Et dont les longs efforts et les peines secrètes  
 Ont, par coups douloureux, arrêté le contour.

Il n'est d'amour réel que d'âmes achevées,  
 D'âmes dont le destin a fini la sculpture,  
 Et qui, s'étant enfin l'une l'autre trouvées,

Se connaissant alors dans leur pleine stature,  
 Échangent gravement une tendresse sûre  
 Et des forces d'aimer par degrés éprouvées.

AUGUSTE ANGELLIER

**F**IRST Love doth fare with most uncertain pace,  
 Unsteady beams, unstable joys that fleet  
 In hearts unsure and souls still incomplete  
 That thrill to fancied light of unborn days.  
 They that do know Love's everlasting grace  
 Have found hard temper in their own defeat,  
 After long toil and taste of bitter sweet  
 Have learnt by heart the outline of his face.

Love is known only to those souls that show  
 Completely graven by the hand of Fate,  
 Their fellow found when they no more can grow :  
 Who in full stature thus together mate  
 Bring each to each a fountain of pure flow,  
 A heart of metal nobly temperate.

◇ ◇ ACHETEZ ◇ ◇  
MES BELLES VIOLETTES

A DIEU, mars ! Déjà l'on peut voir  
Le soleil dorer le trottoir ;  
Avril sourit dans les toilettes,  
Et sur le devant des cafés  
Les messieurs fument, décoiffés.  
*Achetez mes belles violettes !*

Le pierrot flâneur et bavard  
Dit que le long du boulevard  
Les arbres ne sont plus squelettes.  
La feuille pousse, je l'entends.  
La poussière sent le printemps.  
*Achetez mes belles violettes !*

Les amoureux cherchent un nid.  
Les femmes, boursicot garni,  
Vont aux printanières emplettes.  
Tout le monde sans y penser  
A bien deux sous à dépenser.  
*Achetez mes belles violettes !*

Fleurissez-vous, les beaux messieurs !  
Mes bouquets sont couleur des cieux.  
Mesdames, levez vos voilettes.  
Fleurez-moi ça, comme c'est doux !  
Fleurez-moi ça, fleurissez-vous.  
*Achetez mes belles violettes !*

JEAN RICHEPIN

◇ SWEET VIOLETS! ◇  
COME BUY! COME BUY!

FAREWELL to March! Now April rays  
Fall golden on the foot-worn ways  
And April laughs in frill and tie.  
Bareheaded now in open air  
The dandies smoke and sip Madère.  
*Sweet violets ! Come buy ! Come buy !*

The idle sparrows tell the news  
Of how the naked avenues  
Now lift green leaves up to the sky.  
I hear the warm sap pushing through.  
The very dust is scented too.  
*Sweet violets ! Come buy ! Come buy !*

Now lovers bill and buy the ring,  
And merry wives go marketing  
For something gay to greet the eye.  
And everybody else somehow  
Can find an idle penny now.  
*Sweet violets ! Come buy ! Come buy !*

Kind sirs, a buttonhole ! Or take  
My sky-blue posy for her sake !  
Dear ladies, put your sad veils by.  
Now this is sweet and that is too,  
Come wear my lovely posies, do !  
*Sweet violets ! Come buy ! Come buy !*

J'E n'étais qu'une plante inutile, un roseau.  
Aussi je végétais, si frêle, qu'un oiseau  
En se posant sur moi pouvait briser ma vie.  
Maintenant je suis flûte et l'on me porte envie.  
Car un vieux vagabond, voyant que je pleurais,  
Un matin, en passant m'arracha du marais,  
De mon cœur, qu'il vida, fit un tuyau sonore,  
Le mit sécher un an, puis, le perçant encore,  
Il y fixa la gamme avec huit trous égaux ;  
Et depuis, quand sa lèvre aux souffles musicaux  
Éveille les chansons au creux de mon silence,  
Je tressaille, je vibre, et la note s'élance ;  
Le chapelet des sons va s'égrenant dans l'air ;  
On dirait le babil d'une source au flot clair ;  
Et dans ce flot chantant qu'un vague écho répète  
Je sais noyer le cœur de l'homme et de la bête.

JEAN RICHPIN

I WAS a useless reed once, and I swayed  
To any wind ; the lightest bird that stayed  
His flight upon my stem sufficed to rend me.  
Now I'm a flute men hasten to befriend me.  
For once to an old vagabond that heard  
My weeping in the water it occurred  
To pull me up and empty me of pith  
And shape a tube to make sweet music with.  
Well dried, he cut in me eight holes alike  
To make an octave where his fingers strike ;  
And now, whenever his melodious lip  
Draws up the songs that from my hollow slip,  
I shake, I thrill, and up the glad notes fly  
In chains of sound unlinking on the sky.  
You well might say the sound of water running  
Came from my tube, for I have learnt a cunning  
Whereby in my clear flood I drown the doubt  
Of his poor heart and wash all sorrow out.

## ◇ ◇ SONNET CONSOLANT ◇ ◇

**M**ALHEUR aux pauvres ! C'est l'argent qui  
rend heureux.

Les riches ont la force, et la gloire et la joie.

Sur leur nez orgueilleux c'est leur or qui rougeoie.

L'or mettrait du soleil même au front d'un lépreux.

Ils ont tout : les bons plats, les vieux vins généreux,

Les bijoux, les chevaux, le luxe qui flamboie,

Et les belles putains aux cuirasses de soie

Dont les seins provocants ne sont nus que pour eux.

Bah ! Les pauvres, malgré la misère sans trêves,

Ont aussi leurs trésors : les chansons et les rêves.

Ce peu-là leur suffit pour rire quelquefois.

J'en sais qui sont heureux, et qui n'ont pour fortune

Que ces louis d'un jour nommés les fleurs des bois

Et cet écu rogné qu'on appelle la lune.

JEAN RICHEPIN



## ◇ ◇ CONSOLING SONNET ◇ ◇

WOE to the poor ! Well-being is for sale.  
The rich get force, fame, gladness from the  
mint.

On their proud nose gold leaves a ruby tint ;  
Gold brings a sunbeam to make lepers hale.  
They have all things : good dishes and good ale,  
Jewels and horses without any stint,  
And flaunting whores whose bosoms are as flint  
And stay unbared unless the bribe avail.

Bah ! Poor folk, spite of misery without end,  
Have treasures too : their songs, their dreams be-  
friend

Enough to win sometimes bright laughter's boon.  
I know full happy clowns whose only dower  
Is golden disks that in the woodland flower  
And the clipped dollar that men call the moon.

**A** NOIR, *E* blanc, *I* rouge, *U* vert, *O* bleu,  
voyelles,

Je dirai quelque jour vos naissances latentes.

*A*, noir corset velu des mouches éclatantes

Qui bombillent autour des puanteurs cruelles,

Golfes d'ombre ; *E*, candeur des vapeurs et des  
tentes,

Lance des glaciers fiers, rois blancs, frissons  
d'ombelles ;

*I*, pourpres, sang craché, rire des lèvres belles

Dans la colère ou les ivresses pénitentes ;

*U*, cycles, vibrations divins des mers virides,

Paix des pâtis semés d'animaux, paix des rides

Que l'alchimie imprime aux grands fronts studieux ;

*O*, suprême Clairon plein de strideurs étranges,

Silences traversés des Mondes et des Anges :

—*O* l'Oméga, rayon violet de Ses Yeux !

ARTHUR RIMBAUD

SWART *A*, wan *E*, red *I*, green *U*, blue *O*,  
 For your veiled pow'r my mouth fit speech shall  
 use.

*A*, hairy coat of black that binds the thews  
 Of flies that on foul offal sleeker grow,  
 Hollows of darkness ; *E*, bland mists that blow,  
 Chill peaks that soar, buds shaken by the dews ;  
*I*, purple of shed blood, or mouth that sues  
 For pardon, or the red of wrath doth show ;

*U*, Time's slow wheel, sea-tremors shaking greenly,  
 Fair pastoral peace, the light that lies serenely  
 On agèd brows in alchemy grown wise ;  
*O*, shrillest trumpet of fantastic blaring,  
 Silence shot through by stars and angels flaring :  
 Last sound of all, blue beam from God's own eyes !

L'OBSCURITÉ, dans les chambres, le soir, est une  
Irréconciliable apporteuse de craintes ;  
En deuil, s'habillant d'ombre et de linges de lune,  
Elle inquiète ; elle a de félines étreintes  
Comme une eau des canaux traîtres où l'on se noie.  
L'obscurité, c'est la tueuse de la Joie  
Qui dépérit, bouquet de roses transitoires,  
Quand elle y verse un peu de ses fioles noires.  
L'obscurité s'installe avec le crépuscule ;  
Elle descend dans l'âme aussi qui s'enténèbre ;  
Sur le miroir heureux tombe un crêpe funèbre.

GEORGES RODENBACH

AT eve Dusk brings with her to every room  
Fears unassuageable and manifold ;  
In swathes of moonlight under robes of gloom,  
Then hovers she whose soft and feline hold  
Is like smooth water on canals that lurk  
To draw men down into their chilly murk.

Dusk is Joy's slayer—Joy that slowly dies,  
Like handfuls of blown roses when she sheds  
Her inky phials out with furtive eyes ;  
Dusk stealeth down and with the twilight weds ;  
Into the shadowy soul she entereth  
And hides clear mirrors in the veils of Death.

## ◇ LA MARJOLAINE ◇

ON dansait sur le pont du Nord  
 Et la bise y soufflait si fort  
 Qu'elle enleva la Marjolaine,

La Marjolaine et la futaine  
 De sa jupe et ses bas de laine ;  
 Et le nuage en son essor

La frôlait ; et loin de la ville,  
 La pauvre fille vole et file  
 Toujours plus dru, toujours plus fort.

Elle tourbillonne et s'écrie :  
 " Jésus et Madame Marie,  
 Puisque je vogue vers la mort,

" Faites qu'aussitôt étourdie  
 De ma chute, j'entre brandie  
 Dans votre ciel étoilé d'or."

Et sous la nue âpre et glacée  
 Voilà la prière exaucée.  
 Au clocher de Saint-Évremond

La Marjolaine, âme éperdue,  
 Reste tout à coup suspendue  
 Par un accroc de son jupon.

Par la nuit froide et pluvieuse,  
 La gargouille silencieuse  
 Prend soudain parole et lui dit :

## ◇ WILD MARJORIE ◇

AS on the bridge they danced one night  
A breeze blew up and bore in flight  
Wild Marjorie across the sky.

Her homespun socks and petticoat  
Within the dizzy air afloat  
Brushed on the clouds as she went by.

Borne far beyond the town's last street,  
The strong wind drove her on and beat  
Her body with unsparing might.

Whereon she cries as there she spins :  
" Mother of God, forgive my sins  
Since Death for me is sure this night.

" And grant me from this dreadful cast  
To rise a shriven soul at last  
Into your heaven of starry light ! "

Her prayer is answered through the mist  
That freezes round her there. Now, hist !  
She's fast upon the steeplecock,

For Marjorie as she goes by  
Is caught and held against the sky  
By one poor tatter of her frock.

In the long night a silent spout  
With sudden lips of stone speaks out  
And babbles through the rainy swirl.

“ Peu résistante est la futaine.  
Songe à ton heure, hélas ! prochaine,  
Entends-tu rire le Maudit ? ”

Et sous le vent rageur d'automne  
La belle s'épeure et frissonne  
Au-dessus du vide entr'ouvert.

Elle compte dans la nuit brune  
Les toits bleuisant sous la lune  
Et les saints du parvis désert ;

Et le Maudit déjà ricane,  
Quand un parfum monte et s'émane,  
D'encens, de benjoin et de nards,

Et, portant à la main des palmes,  
Dans l'espace et sous le ciel calmes  
Ascensionnent de grands vieillards ;

De grands vieillards en robe blanche,  
Dont le front chauve oscille et penche  
Sur des chapes de lourds brocats,

Et puis ce sont, par théories,  
Des vierges en robes fleuries  
D'étoiles et de lys épars.

Les fronts sont nimbés d'auréoles.  
De longs archanges en étoles  
Font cortège, et de purs regards

D'azur sombre, où l'on sent des âmes,  
Sillonent de grands traits de flammes  
La nuit, la lune et les brouillards.



“ There’s little strength in that poor stuff  
That holds you there. Death’s sure enough.  
The Devil’s laughing at you, girl.”

And hanging there by one poor clout,  
A thing for all the winds to flout,  
The wench’s heart grew very faint.

She counted there, the long night through,  
The roofs in moonlight turning blue,  
The hard eyes of each carven saint.

The gloating Devil, too, had laughed  
When suddenly he caught a waft  
Of censers swinging in the night,

And up beyond the steeplecock  
With palm in hand there went a flock  
Of venerable men in white ;

Old men in white, with giant shapes,  
Whose shaven polls upon their capes  
Are ever nodding as they go,

And maids proceeding after them  
In robes aflower from sleeve to hem  
With sheen of stars or lily-glow.

Round their pure brows are aureoles.  
Great angels with their gleaming stoles  
Leading their flight, look forth and cleave

With their pure glance a burning wake  
That shows the way their white souls take  
Over the misty moonlit eve.

Et cela monte avec des psaumes  
Et des noëls, anges, fantômes,  
De vierges saintes et d'élus,

Et conduit en cérémonie  
La Marjolaine à l'agonie  
Dans le paradis de Jésus.

JEAN LORRAIN

Up soars the throng of glorified  
Maidens and men, a phantom tide  
    With carolling and chant of psalms,

And there with pomp amid the throng  
Wild Marjorie they bear along  
    To Paradise and Jesu's arms.

SIMONE, la neige est blanche comme ton cou,  
 Simone, la neige est blanche comme tes genoux.

Simone, ta main est froide comme la neige,  
 Simone, ton cœur est froid comme la neige.

La neige ne fond qu'à un baiser de feu,  
 Ton cœur ne fond qu'à un baiser d'adieu.

La neige est triste sur les branches des pins,  
 Ton front est triste sous tes cheveux châains.

Simone, ta sœur la neige dort dans la cour,  
 Simone, tu es ma neige et mon amour.

REMY DE GOURMONT

SIMONĚ, the snow is white as the pure white  
     skin

Of thy two knees or the whiteness under thy chin.

Simoně, thy hand is cold as the white snow is ;

Simoně, thy heart likewise is as cold as this.

Only a kiss of fire turns the snow to rain,

And only a farewell kiss makes thy chill heart fain.

The snow is sad on the boughs that the tall pines  
     bear ;

Thy brow is sad in the shadow of thy gold hair.

Flight-weary, thy sister the snow sleeps there like a  
     dove :

Simoně, thou art my snow and my heart's dear love.

MES douze palais d'or ne pouvant plus suffire,  
 Mon cœur royal désenchanté du jour,  
 Un soir, j'ai fait monter mon trône de porphyre,  
 Pour jamais, au plus haut de ma plus haute tour.

Et là, dominant l'homme et les cités sonores,  
 J'ai vécu seul parmi l'azur silencieux  
 A voir, indifférent, les couchants, les aurores  
 Mirer leurs ciels dans l'eau déserte de mes yeux.

Pâle je vis, le goût de la mort à la bouche.  
 La Terre est sous mes pieds comme un chien qui se  
     couche,  
 Mes mains flottent parmi les étoiles, la nuit.

Rien n'a distraît mes yeux immobiles sans trêve ;  
 Rien n'a rempli mon cœur toujours vide, qui rêve  
 Sur l'incommensurable mer de mon ennui ;

Et le Néant m'a fait une âme comme lui.

ALBERT SAMAIN

MY royal heart o'erburdened, sought to shun  
Men and the rumour of men in serene air ;  
Wherefore I builded me a marble stair,  
And rose aloft to sway the world as one  
That in dumb azure hath dominion.

My eyes like sightless desert pools would stare  
Alike on dawn and dusk, I dwelling there  
On the wide sky remote even as the sun.

Earth like a prone hound props my feet. The rank  
Savour of Death is on my pallid lips ;  
My fingers grope amid the starry glooms.  
I gaze out hollow-hearted on the blank  
And incommensurable void that looms  
In very likeness of my soul's eclipse.

MON cœur est un beau lac solitaire qui tremble,  
Hanté d'oiseaux furtifs et de rameaux frôleurs,  
Où le vol argenté des sylphes bleus s'assemble  
En un soir diaphane où défailent des fleurs.

La lune y fait rêver ses pâleurs infinies ;  
L'aurore en son cristal baigne ses pieds rosés ;  
Et sur ses bords, en d'éternelles harmonies,  
Soupire l'orgue des grands joncs inapaisés.

ALBERT SAMAIN



MY heart's a lonely mere. And wings most shy  
And soft leaves smooth it. There at eve go by  
A flock of sylphs in silver flight that shake  
The blooms of sunset fading down the sky.

The moon lies there in her white dream. Down slide  
Dawn's rosy feet into the pool. Wind-plied,

The restless reeds through chill, dark fathoms draw  
Their organ-music from a restless tide.

MON enfance captive a vécu dans des pierres,  
 Dans la ville où sans fin, vomissant le charbon,  
 L'usine en feu dévore un peuple moribond :  
 Et pour voir des jardins je fermais les paupières. . . .

J'ai grandi ; j'ai rêvé d'orient, de lumières,  
 De rivages de fleurs où l'air tiède sent bon,  
 De cités aux noms d'or, et, seigneur vagabond,  
 De pavés florentins où traîner des rapières.

Puis je pris en dégoût le carton du décor  
 Et maintenant, j'entends en moi l'âme du Nord  
 Qui chante, et chaque jour j'aime d'un cœur plus fort

Ton air de sainte femme, ô ma terre de Flandre,  
 Ton peuple grave et droit, ennemi de l'esclandre,  
 Ta douceur de misère où le cœur se sent prendre,

Tes marais, tes prés verts où rouissent les lins,  
 Tes bateaux, ton ciel gris où tournent les moulins,  
 Et cette veuve en noir avec ses orphelins. . . .

ALBERT SAMAIN

A CHILD, I dwelt amid the sooty spawn  
 Of factories belching flame into the mist—  
 Black mills that suck down dying men for grist.  
 Save with shut eyes I never saw green lawn. . . .  
 Older, I dreamed of Memphis and the Dawn,  
 And smell of sun-woo'd flowers. I had a tryst  
 In old illustrious cities, and I'd list  
 O'er Tuscan flags the shining rapiers drawn.

But I grew sick of painting mosque and palm,  
 And now I hear the North's soul like a psalm,  
 My heart grown fain, O Motherland, of thee,  
 My Flanders, with thy saintly woman's gaze,  
 Thine upright folk that brook not calumny,  
 Thy hardships suffered with heroic calm,  
 Thy fens, thy meadows with their flaxen sheens,  
 Thy boats, thy windmills turning thro' the haze,  
 And this sad widow with her orphan'd weans. . . .

O H ! que sa main est petite et blanche !  
On dirait une fleur qui penche. . . .

Elle repose, elle dort,  
Elle a touché la mort,

Elle est vide, et toute légère,  
Elle a accompli son sort sur la terre.

Tu peux la prendre, ô Seigneur !  
Elle a touché le bonheur. . . .

La lune brille sur son visage,  
Et ses yeux sont pleins de nuages. . .

Sa bouche pose, entr'ouverte et paisible,  
Comme au bord d'une coupe invisible.

On a couché ses longs bandeaux  
Comme des blés sous une faux.

Lentement, sans bruit, sans secousse,  
La porte s'ouvre sur la nuit douce. . . .

CHARLES VAN LERBERGHE

## ◇ ◇ FAREWELL ◇ ◇

HER hand's so small, so whitely hued,  
Hanging, a flower's similitude. . . .

She is at peace, she slumbereth ;  
Her hand has touched the hand of Death.

She lies a light and emptied thing ;  
She's done with this world's wandering.

Lord, Thou mayst take her to Thy fold ;  
Her hand of bliss has taken hold. . . .

The moon upon her face is rayed,  
And her two eyes are full of shade.

Her quiet mouth has parted lips,  
As though an unseen draught she sips.

Now all her loosened tresses look  
Like corn beneath the reaping-hook.

Slowly, noiseless, with none made ware,  
The door swings wide to the night's soft air. . . .

LA terre garde encor la trace  
De son dernier printemps flétri,  
Qu'au souffle de l'avril qui passe  
Toutes choses ont refleurì.

Mon âme garde encor la plaie  
De ses derniers songes défunts,  
Qu'au souffle d'avril qui l'égaie,  
La bercent de nouveaux parfums.

O mon âme, jardin morose  
Où pleurent d'éternels soucis,  
Qui nous rendra l'éclat des roses  
Et l'azur des cieux adoucìs ?

Et quelles bouches enfantines,  
Quelles candeurs aux chastes doigts,  
Feront refleurir, dans tes ruines,  
Le doux sourire d'autrefois ?

CHARLES VAN LERBERGHE

THOUGH April's random breathing bring  
New buds to blossom everywhere,  
The earth forgets not the last Spring  
That stript her branches bare.

Though April blow a merry sound  
And soothe with odours once again,  
My soul forgets not the deep wound  
Whereby her dreams were slain.

O soul, a dreary garden grown  
That weeps with sorrow comfortless,  
Who shall bring back the roses blown,  
The sky's blue loveliness ?

What childish lips, what hand in trust  
With fingers pure that cannot feign,  
Shall bring to blossom from thy dust  
The old lost smile again ?

## CONSOLATRICE DES AFFLIGÉS

OR, l'Hiver m'a donné la main,  
J'ai la main d'Hiver dans les mains,

Et dans ma tête, au loin, il brûle  
Les vieux étés de canicules ;

Et dans mes yeux, en candeurs lentes,  
Très blanchement il fait des tentes,

Dans mes yeux il fait des Siciles,  
Puis des îles, encor des îles.

Et c'est tout un voyage en rond,  
Trop vite pour la guérison,

A tous les pays où l'on meurt  
Au long cours des mers et des heures ;

Et c'est tout un voyage au vent,  
Sur les vaisseaux de mes lits blancs

Qui houlent avec des étoiles  
A l'entour de toutes les voiles.

Or, j'ai le goût de mer aux lèvres  
Comme une rancœur de genièvre

Bu pour la très mauvaise orgie  
Des départs dans les tabagies ;



## ◇ MATER CONSOLATRIX ◇

MY hand is held by Winter cold,  
And I of his have taken hold,

And in my head he sets ablaze  
The far-off suns of dead dog-days ;

Before my eyes, so bland and slow,  
He sets the white tents all a-row,

And Sicilies before them drift,  
And isles on isles. It is too swift

To bring me healing of my pain,  
This voyage round and round again,

To every land whereon men swoon  
In the slow tide and the long noon ;

It is a run before the gale  
On vessels made of bedsteads pale

That rise and fall with tangled stars  
Betwixt the canvas and the spars.

Now on my lips I taste the brine  
As bitter as Geneva wine

Swilled down in mad carousals made  
In taverns ere the anchor's weighed ;

Puis ce pays encor me vient :  
Un pays de neige sans fin . . . ;

Marie des bonnes couvertures,  
Faites-y la neige moins dure

Et courir moins, comme des lièvres,  
Mes mains sur mes draps blancs de fièvre.

MAX ELSKAMP

And then this land again comes round,  
Where endless snow hides all the ground. . . .

Mary of covers warm and clean,  
Let not the snow strike down so keen,

And stay my fevered hands that go  
White on the sheet like hares in snow !



DE hauts peupliers dont le feuillage frémit  
Comme si des oiseaux y prenaient leurs volées  
Reflètent, un à un, leurs tiges isolées  
Dans le fuyant miroir du canal endormi ;

Au-dessus du vieux pont courbant son arche unique,  
Au ras du parapet noir, la lune, émergeant  
Dans sa rondeur et dans son éclat mat d'argent,  
Monte dans le ciel clair, calme et mélancolique ;

Alentour, sur les champs, les routes, les buissons,  
S'épandent des lueurs douces de nuits rêvées ;  
Nul pas humain ne va sonnant sur les levées.

Et pourtant, l'air est plein d'impalpables frissons,  
Et, là-bas, très distinct en ces rumeurs confuses,  
Chante l'écoulement de l'eau dans les écluses. . . .

HENRI DE RÉGNIER

FROM poplars shuddering in their leafy swoon  
As though therefrom a flock of birds took flight  
There falls each separate image, sole and slight,  
On the dim mirror of the drowsed lagoon.  
Flush with the dark wall, lo ! the full round moon  
Swerves from the bridge, and with her silver light  
Clear and aloof, in sadness infinite  
Mounts thro' the sky to her unclouded noon.

By field and lane and hedgerow falls the spell  
Of gloaming nights that only dream can give ;  
No laggard heel along the causey rings.  
Yet doth the fickle air grow voluble,  
While sole and constant thro' the flooded sieve  
The loud weir-water to the twilight sings.

JE ne veux de personne auprès de ma tristesse  
Ni même ton cher pas et ton visage aimé,  
Ni ta main indolente et qui d'un doigt caresse  
Le ruban paresseux et le livre fermé.

Laissez-moi. Que ma porte aujourd'hui reste close ;  
N'ouvrez pas ma fenêtre au vent frais du matin ;  
Mon cœur est aujourd'hui misérable et morose  
Et tout me paraît sombre et tout me semble vain.

Ma tristesse me vient de plus loin que moi-même,  
Elle m'est étrangère et ne m'appartient pas,  
Et tout homme, qu'il chante ou qu'il rie ou qu'il  
aime,  
A son heure l'entend qui lui parle tout bas,

Et quelque chose alors se remue et s'éveille,  
S'agite, se répand et se lamente en lui,  
A cette sourde voix qui lui dit à l'oreille,  
Que la fleur de la vie est cendre dans son fruit.

HENRI DE RÉGNIER

LET Sorrow feed on me. Prevent thy fairer  
Face and thy footfall until she be fled ;  
Let the book lie alone with the despairer  
Unsmoothed by thy soft fingers and unread.

Lock thou my door and leave me unbefriended ;  
I'll hasp the sill against the windy gust.  
To-day I only see a mad world blended  
Of darkness and our unavailing dust.

My Sorrow comes from far. Her breath is bated.  
Her garb is strange. I know her not at all.  
And unto each, or early or belated,  
There comes the terror of her light footfall,

And Joy is stifled by a dreadful presage,  
And from each soul a dreadful cry is wrung  
In answer to the murmur of her message  
That all Life's fruit turns ashen on the tongue.

## ◇ ◇ LE JOUR ET L'OMBRE ◇ ◇

C E beau jour n'est plus rien que son ombre  
odorante ;

La lumière est éteinte et le vent disparu ;  
Le parfum ténébreux de l'arbre et de la plante  
A remplacé pour nous la forme qu'ils n'ont plus.

La forêt incertaine est à peine un murmure  
Où la feuille invisible à la feuille s'unit,  
Et le fleuve n'est plus qu'une fraîcheur obscure  
Qu'aspire en soupirant l'haleine de la nuit.

Il semble que le temps et l'ombre et le silence  
Ordonnent de mourir et de fermer les yeux,  
Car si le jour renaît, revient et recommence,  
Aura-t-il la beauté de ce jour radieux ?

Et du fleuve, de la forêt et de la plante,  
De tout ce qui fut lui, refera-t-il demain  
Ce ténébreux parfum et cette ombre odorante  
Où persiste embaumé son souvenir divin ?

HENRI DE RÉGNIER



## ◇ ◇ DAY AND DARKNESS ◇ ◇

OF this fair day the phantom scent remains.  
 The light has gone, the last faint wind has flown;  
 The cloudy perfume of the leafage feigns  
 The unforgotten beauty we have known.

There's scarce a murmur in the unseen mesh  
 Of boughs that tremble in a passionate tryst.  
 The stream's a hidden coolness to the flesh  
 Of Night whose sighs make one with the warm  
 mist.

Time, Shade, and Silence bid us now receive  
 Death's solace with the dark. Will not the sun  
 With any morrow's dawning now bereave  
 Our eyes of the dear brightness they have won?

And will not flower, stream, and wood deny  
 This hallowed mem'ry that awhile we share,  
 And all the beauty of this day go by,  
 A phantom scent, an odorous despair?

J'AI fui les flots mouvants pour ce calme vallon.  
 Il est fertile. Un bois y est tout l'horizon  
 Et sa rumeur imite à l'oreille incertaine  
 Le bruit aérien de quelque mer lointaine  
 Qui m'apporte l'écho de mon passé marin,  
 Et, quand l'orme gémit et que tremble le pin,  
 Je crois entendre encor en leur glauque murmure  
 Se plaindre le cordage et craquer la mâture,  
 Et l'oblique sillon que je trace en marchant  
 Derrière ma charrue au travers de mon champ  
 Me semble, dans la glèbe épaisse, grasse et brune,  
 Quelque vague immobile, inerte et sans écume  
 Qui se gonfle, s'allonge et ne déferle pas.  
 Car, vieillard, j'ai quitté la mer et ses combats  
 Pour la tâche tranquille où mon labeur s'applique.  
 Et mon houleux matin s'achève en soir rustique,  
 Et dans mes noirs filets tant de fois recousus  
 J'ai fait une besace où je ne porte plus  
 En ses mailles, mêlés à quelques feuilles sèches,  
 Que les fruits qu'offre l'herbe à ma terrestre pêche.

HENRI DE RÉGNIER

**F**OR this calm vale I have put seafaring by.  
 Fertile it is. A wood cuts off the sky,  
 Making a sound that vaguely brings to mind  
 The uncertain rumour of the far sea-wind  
 That once I dwelt in. When the elms are wailing  
 And the pines tremble, I again am sailing  
 And hear the cords groan and the mastheads creak ;  
 And when behind me rises the oblique  
 Line of cleft earth by furrows that I plough  
 Over the field, the rich marl seems somehow  
 A wave inert, unbrittle, without foam  
 Swelling in line along the cloven loam  
 And never breaking. I am young no more  
 And cannot strive with the strong tides for shore,  
 But labour here where no rude surges heave :  
 My sea-racked morning hath a rural eve.  
 My nets now make a sack which I pull taut  
 Over the harvest of good herbage caught  
 Within their mended meshes when I tread  
 The shoalèd tilth to find my daily bread.

ACE grand cœur marqué du signe de Saturne  
 Il ne sied pas, sur la colline, d'ériger  
 Dans les bocages verts un monument léger ;  
 Laisse l'ombre à l'esprit songeur et taciturne.

Élève sur le roc cette stèle et cette urne :  
 L'if noir remplacera le myrte et l'oranger ;  
 Si parmi nous il dort comme un triste étranger,  
 Sois-lui du moins clémente, ô douce paix nocturne.

Sur le marbre glacé qui comprime son front,  
 Le soir, silencieux et froids, se poseront  
 Les corbeaux ténébreux et les aigles rapaces.

Ne grave ni flambeau, ni colombe, ni fleur.  
 Respecte sa pensée amère. O toi qui passes,  
 Lis ces seuls mots : " Il fut aimé de la Douleur ! "

VALÈRE GILLE

XCVII

FOR THE TOMB OF BAUDELAIRE

FOR this great heart with Saturn's sign engraven  
 Let no light monument upon an hill  
 Be reared amid green boughs : 'twould suit him ill.  
 Leave his dark spirit with the dark for haven.  
 Hew from the rock his tomb, and let the raven  
 Boughs of the yew instead of blossom spill  
 About his sleep. If he be weary still,  
 O Night, with silence be thy pathways paven !

Over the marble chill that hides his head  
 Black crows and loathèd vultures that seek food  
 At eve shall voiceless and benumbèd brood.  
 Grave neither torch nor dove nor flower. Instead  
 Respect his bitter thought. Let this be read :  
 " He was beloved of Sorrow whom he woo'd."

LES boucliers luisants sont suspendus au hêtre.  
 La gorge est endormie et sombre encore.  
 Auprès

De leur chef, les guerriers, sans peur et sans regrets,  
 Attendent leur destin. Le soleil va paraître.

Demain, la Grèce en deuil les pleurera : le prêtre  
 A consulté les dieux ; ils mourront. Ils sont prêts.  
 Déjà par le sentier, caché dans les cyprès,  
 Hydarnès vient sans bruit, accompagné d'un traître.

Mais soit ! sous un nuage épais de traits stridents,  
 A l'ombre ils lutteront de la pique et des dents.  
 Derrière eux, comme un mur, les rochers droits  
 s'étagent.

Et si le fer se brise, ils prendront le bâton.  
 En ce moment, d'une âme égale, ils se partagent  
 Quelques figes. Ce soir, ils soupent chez Pluton.

VALÈRE GILLE

THE shining bucklers on the ash hang high.  
 The gully sleeps in shade. The warrior clan  
 Nigh to their chief await their doom, nor can  
 Or fear or sorrow move them. Dawn is nigh.  
 To-morrow Greece will mourn them: they shall die  
 Ev'n as the priest foretold it. Not one man  
 Shrinks. Under cypress-trees erewhile there ran  
 Hydarnes and the traitor stealthily.

So be it! The shrill arrows underneath,  
 In shadow they will strive with pike and teeth.  
 Behind them like a wall the rocks rise up.  
 And if the blade break, then the shaft shall smite.  
 They are eating figs as unaware. To-night  
 At Pluto's darkened table they shall sup.

IL va neiger dans quelques jours. Je me souviens de l'an dernier. Je me souviens de mes tristesses au coin du feu. Si l'on m'avait demandé : qu'est-ce ?

j'aurais dit : Laissez-moi tranquille. Ce n'est rien.

J'ai bien réfléchi, l'année avant, dans ma chambre, pendant que la neige lourde tombait dehors.

J'ai réfléchi pour rien. A présent comme alors je fume une pipe en bois avec un bout d'ambre.

Ma vieille commode en chêne sent toujours bon. Mais moi j'étais bête parce que ces choses ne pouvaient pas changer et que c'est une pose de vouloir chasser les choses que nous savons.

Pourquoi donc pensons-nous et parlons-nous ? C'est drôle ;

nos larmes et nos baisers, eux, ne parlent pas, et cependant nous les comprenons, et les pas d'un ami sont plus doux que de douces paroles.

On a baptisé les étoiles sans penser qu'elles n'avaient pas besoin de nom et les nombres, qui prouvent que les belles comètes dans l'ombre passeront, ne les forceront pas à passer.



## ◇ THE COMING OF THE SNOW ◇

A FEW days to pass, and the snow will be ready  
to fall.

I remember my troubles last year by the warm  
hearthside.

Had anyone asked me, "Old fellow, what is it  
you hide?"

I'd have answered: "Just leave me alone, for it's  
nothing at all."

Last year, with the snow falling down, long, long  
did I spend

In my room all alone with my thoughts that went  
searching in vain,

For nothing was altered, and here I am sitting  
again

And smoking my old wooden pipe with its amber-  
tipped end.

My old oaken settle's still solid and pleasant to smell.

How foolish I was to be fretting for things gone  
awry

And yet beyond mending; how silly the effort to fly  
After things that will go their own way as we know  
very well.

What use is our thought and our chatter? How  
strange is the sound!

Our kisses and tears without words never go  
undivined;

And sweeter to hear than are speeches no matter  
how kind

Is step after step of a friend falling soft on the ground.

Et maintenant même, où sont mes vieilles tristesses  
de l'an dernier ? A peine si je m'en souviens.  
Je dirais : Laissez-moi tranquille, ce n'est rien,  
si dans ma chambre on venait me demander : qu'est-  
ce ?

FRANCIS JAMMES

We have given their names to the stars without  
pausing to think

That the names were unneeded, nor yet that our  
reckonings made

Do not hasten them forward nor turn them aside  
from the shade

Though they prove that the comets down into the  
darkness will sink.

And now, even now, last year's troubles, say where  
have they flown ?

I can hardly bring back to my mind even one of  
the throng.

If anyone comes to my chamber and asks, " What  
is wrong ? "

I shall answer again : " It is nothing ; just leave me  
alone."

**P**OURQUOI renouer l'amourette ? C'est-y bien la peine d'aimer ? Le câble est cassé, fillette. C'est-y toi qu'a trop tiré ?

C'est-y moi ? C'est-y un autre ? C'est-y le bon Dieu des Chrétiens ? Il est cassé ; c'est la faute à personne ; on le sait bien.

L'amour, ça passe dans tant de cœurs ; c'est une corde à tant d'vaisseaux, et ça passe dans tant d'anneaux, à qui la faute si ça s'use ?

Y a trop d'amoureux sur terre, à tirer sur l'même péché. C'est-y la faute à l'amour, si sa corde est si usée ?

Pourquoi renouer l'amourette ? C'est-y bien la peine d'aimer ? Le câble est cassé, fillette, c'est toi qui a trop tiré.

PAUL FORT

## ◆   ◆   THE LOVE-KNOT   ◆   ◆

WHY tie the lover's knot again? Is loving really worth a sigh? My dear, the cord has broke in twain. And was it you that pulled awry?

Or was it I? Another flame? Or the good God that Christians fear? It's broken. Nobody's to blame. We know that well enough, my dear.

Love through so many hearts finds way. So many ships strain on the string. It has to pass through many a ring. How can it help but wear away?

There are too many loving men to haul upon the slender line; and how can love be held to sin, if the thin cord wears out in time?

Why tie the lover's knot again? Is loving really worth a sigh? My dear, the cord has broke in twain. And it was you that pulled awry.



# Notes





# NOTES

*The references are to the poems, by number*

1. This poem is ascribed to a woman. The original is in Provençal, and is plainly that from which Swinburne derived his poem *In an Orchard*.

2-3. JEHAN FROISSART (1337-1410?) was born at Valenciennes, near what is now the Belgian frontier. He entered the Church at three-and-twenty, and was in London at the Court as secretary to Queen Philippa in 1362. He accompanied the Black Prince to war, but returned to his native Hainault on the death of the Queen-Mother in 1369. It is not known when he died, but he was back in England and still busy on his *Chronicles* later than this last date. His shorter poems have much charm, but the longer allegories are laboured and ingenious to a degree that confounds all delight in the reader.

4. EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS (1340-1410?) lived on the favours of the great in a diversity of offices and with much variation of fortune in a warring age. He is one of the main sources of our information on the manners and customs of the Court of the successive Kings Charles (V and VI) under whom he served. Wit, malice, and ridicule he has in plenty, but he is too glib for anything but light matter, though a lament for the death of Du Guesclin shows him in labour with a deeper feeling. Another of his *ballades* bears eloquent witness to the worth of the "Grant translateur, noble Geffroy Chaucier," whom he probably met. Two stanzas are omitted from No. 4.

5. It will be seen that the fifth line of each stanza of the English rendering of this poem is an invention of my own and finds no warrant in the original French. I have italicized it to show that here the poet speaks to himself and not to his audience. I have played the same trick in No. 27, and hope to be forgiven for it.

6-9. FRANÇOIS VILLON (1431-89?). Little is known of the life of Villon, and nothing to his credit. We know from his *Grant Testament* (No. 9) that he had a kind thought for his mother; whoever his father may have been—and one Montcorbier has been surmised—he did not bear this name, but

took it from the village whose priest bore all the care of his upbringing and rebellious youth. The crony of cut-throats and all outcasts of the road, though he must have mastered polite French as a graduate of the University of Paris, he preferred to write in the slang of those boon companions along with whom he was condemned to be hanged. This was in 1461, when he was rescued by the influence of those in high places. He was probably known at the Court of Charles d'Orléans; but the gallows seems to be the likeliest scene for his exit at a date of which there is no record. He is the first great French poet, in spite of the conventional forms which he subdued to his highly original purposes. All that he writes has been felt and has been written to relieve his feelings rather than—as with his immediate predecessors—to flatter those of some august reader or hearer, since he was probably among the last who delivered his message by mouth in an age when the literate were still in a minority even among the higher ranks.

**10-24.** PIERRE DE RONSARD (1524-85), the seventh child of the Chevalier de Ronsard, was born on September 11, 1524, at the Château de la Poissonnière in the Vendôme. The father was High Steward of the King's household, and his family derived both domain and royal favour from a successful Rumanian forbear who, two centuries before this event, had taken service with Philippe de Valois and helped him to rout the invading English. On his mother's side the poet claimed a remote kinship with the English royal line, and was later to count both Mary Stuart and Elizabeth Tudor among his high patrons. At nine years of age he became page to Charles d'Orléans, and when the Duke's sister married the Scottish king he accompanied her to Edinburgh, where he remained two years, learning to construe Virgil and Horace under a Scottish tutor, and helping no doubt to leaven his neighbours' phlegm with the sprinkling of Gallic culture that survives in the *gigot* and *fasb* of the Northern vernacular.

Already writing verses before he had reached his teens, he successfully withstood the proposals of his anxious father to choose a career amid arms, medicine, or the law; and, in the hope of diverting him from his poetic whim, he was sent as king's envoy on successive missions to Flanders, to Holland, and again to Scotland. Then followed a visit to Germany

in the retinue of the French ambassador, and thereafter a similar visit as member of a diplomatic mission to Turin. He returned at sixteen to the royal Court at Blois, but was soon sent thence to Paris, where he spent seven years under the celebrated Hellenist Jean Daurat, feverishly absorbed in the study of Greek and Latin authors. While there he met JOACHIM DU BELLAY (1525-60), a kinsman far removed in blood, but nearer than a brother in likeness of mind and predilection. The name of this new friend was soon to appear at the foot of the manifesto of a new school of poets, seven in number, who had been christened the *Pléiade* by their leader Ronsard. His first book, published in the following year, when he was twenty, was immediately successful, though written in a new manner steeped with classicism, affecting a new form in the sonnet, reviving an old one in the alexandrine, and ignoring the outworn forms of French repetitive verse, from which all life and sincerity had been steadily ebbing since Villon had used them. The rest of Ronsard's life, of which forty years were still remaining, is the story of poetical successes and courtly favours. Thereafter he was to travel no farther from his home than Paris, enjoying continuously increasing fame and affluence, the nominal lord of abbeys and priories whose revenues he enjoyed by royal—if not by divine—appointment.

Ronsard grafted the sonnet form which he copied from Petrarch on to the stem of French poetry, and it reached our shores mainly through him and Du Bellay, as the nearly contemporary translations of Spenser and Thomas Lodge bear witness. Steeped as the *Pléiade* were in classical learning, Ronsard and Du Bellay at least were always able to express the reality of a personal emotion even when they were most clearly following the shadow of an earlier model. Indeed, Du Bellay's two most famous pieces are known to derive through Italian from Latin. Ronsard, less than any other of the school, is detached from his personal experiences; his successive loves—a symptom, too surely seen, of an excessive vanity—are all wreaked upon expression more completely than could have happened in life itself. His joy in nature, in physical well-being, in good cheer, in youthful ardency of every kind, is everywhere clear and carries its own infection to the reader; but one feels at times that a poet's gift of expression can be too highly cultivated, and one longs to be

a little less conscious of his sophistication, a little less aware of his spirit being tied like a kite to the tail of material satisfactions before it will consent to soar.

Now in Du Bellay, with his briefer life and smaller output, you find a strain of ironical banter against the honey-tongued insincerity of a world that irked him ; he found only prickles in the same bed where Ronsard found his roses ; you find in him a yearning for a world utterly beyond that to which Ronsard was wholly glad to be responsive here and now ; and you have in him the large vision of Eternal Time playing havoc with our temporary and trivial glories. I am bound to think that of the two Du Bellay was the finer spirit, and that the amorous prior might have seemed to his contemporaries a lesser man had not his companion at an early age abandoned the pursuit of Court favour for the still choir of Notre-Dame de Paris after death had freed " *son âme emprisonnée*."

**20.** Both Ronsard and Du Bellay were stricken with deafness.

**26.** PHILIPPE DESPORTES (1546-1608) was born at Chartres, led an adventurous and wanton life, and finished by favour of his king the richest abbot in all France. He derived much, as did Ronsard, from Petrarch, but, beyond this fluent adaptability, brought little that was new into French poetry, in which he repeated, though with some loss of distinction, the successes of his elders among the *Pléiade*.

**28-29.** PIERRE CORNEILLE (1606-84) was born in Rouen, the eldest child of a lawyer who, by dint of hard work, achieved a patent of nobility. He first followed his father's calling, but soon gravitated to the theatre, becoming the founder of the French classical drama, in which, however, his success with the public was variable. A great master of rhetoric, his plays show abstract and positive qualities in opposition rather than the interplay of complex human minds. His characters are good or bad, happy or unhappy, by the degree in which they conform to the standards of social rightness which were the ideal of his age.

**28.** The " *Marquise* " was Mademoiselle du Parc, an actress of Molière's company, and Corneille was her suitor after he had passed his fiftieth year.

**30-32.** JEAN DE LA FONTAINE (1621-1695) is accounted among the greatest of French poets by the French themselves. His

own people should be a poet's best judges, but in spite of their testimony, supported in recent years by the highly reasoned pleading of Mr Maurice Baring, Mr Lytton Strachey, and others among our best-qualified writers, the importance of La Fontaine *qua* poet seems considerably overstated. In his own line there are none to better him; but he deals with a type of story and a play of mind which more properly illustrate the analytical than the poetic faculty. His manner is certainly a thing entirely his own, and particularly to be marked in an age that was all for classical propriety and strict form; for he varies his line-length to suit the whim of his argument or the humour of his narrative, and reverts far back to the Ronsardian and pre-Ronsardian vocabulary to find the fit word which shall render his story (frequently stolen from Æsop) more racy of his own soil and period. His *Fables* display an effortless economy of means, his points being made most wittily and yet in the casual and easy language of common speech. He did not begin to write until he was approaching the forties, being then driven to make good by his pen the lack of the patrimony which he had so carelessly spent. He passed his later years as a pensioner of wealthy friends who were proud to have him; despite the potted wisdom of his *Fables* he displayed none at all in his private affairs, save the redeeming kind of making every one love him. "He was the most sincere and the most open-minded man whom I ever knew," wrote Maucroix, his lifelong friend. "He disguised nothing, and I doubt whether he ever told a lie in his life."

**35-37.** ANDRÉ CHÉNIER (1762-94) was born at Constantinople of a Greek mother, his father being French consul there. He came to France while still a child, entered the army at twenty, but soon abandoned it for diplomacy, which took him, as secretary of the Embassy, to London. He returned to France after two somewhat listless years, and became unfortunately involved in the political movements of the day, declining, however, to support the more violent and sweeping pretensions of the revolutionary party. His moderation being unpopular, he withdrew to the country, returning after a while when he supposed himself forgotten. In this hope he was mistaken, for he was soon arrested, cast into prison, and four months later perished on the guillotine. This happened



only two days before the fall of Robespierre, an event which would certainly have saved him.

Though his name is most readily associated with his lovely retelling of the old Greek myths, his real greatness is even more certainly witnessed by the bitter political poems which he wrote in prison and addressed to the pretended worshippers but real affronters of liberty.

**39.** ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE (1790-1869), one of the greatest of all lyric poets, was born at Mâcon. His *Méditations* was the first book in which the vague exaltation and exalted piety of the new Romantic feeling became articulate. He is the most pure-minded of French poets, the most whole-hearted martyr to the sentiments that devour him, the least sullied by doubts as to the good-will of God and of his fellow-men. Unfortunately for his art, his miraculous gift of sonority achieved without effort was in turn chastened by no critical afterthought, and no pruning or polishing was given to what he set down for his heart's relief. His gift of lyrical rhapsody forbids the citation of Wordsworth's work as an apt parallel, but the basis of each, if we take it to be the divinity of Nature and the necessity of salvation through 'natural piety' in her children, is strikingly alike.

Lamartine served in the French army, and, a convinced royalist, crossed the Italian frontier to avoid service under Napoleon. Returning after Waterloo, he published his epoch-marking *Méditations*, and soon afterward married an English girl, a choice which proved of enduring happiness. He then entered political life, and after varying fortunes and a somewhat ineffectual career was driven in his declining years to take up his pen for a livelihood. He continued in somewhat deplorable straits until two years before his death, when the Empire granted him a capital sum which relieved further anxiety.

The piece here rendered is a fragment from Section V of *La Vigne et La Maison*.

**40.** ALFRED DE VIGNY (1797-1863) was born at Loches, the younger son of a family which had been ruined by the Revolution. At eighteen he entered the army, and ten years later married an English girl who had plenty of money but very little French. Her father's displeasure caused a disappointment of the poet's expectations, and he soon replaced in his

affections one who was never, in any way, his Egeria. His *Servitude et grandeur militaires* enshrines his experiences in the army, from which he retired soon after his marriage, and reveals that respect for the stoic element which is the outstanding feature of his poetry. He says

J'aime la majesté des souffrances humaines,

and his best poems display and justify this preference. In this respect he was a precursor of Leconte de Lisle; his independence "d'esprit et de parole" had already made him diverge from the facile enthusiasms of his fellow Romantics, while his posthumous poems showed a turn for symbolism which, save for his classically restrained prosody, was quite akin to that in vogue during the eighteen-nineties. His most popular poem *Le Cor*, awakening a loud chord of racial memory, certainly justifies his own claim "d'avoir devancé en France tous ceux de ce genre dans lequel une pensée philosophique est mise en scène sous une forme épique ou dramatique."

He adapted Shakespeare's *Othello* for the French stage and made a drama of his own from the story of Chatterton.

**41-47.** VICTOR HUGO (1802-85), of mingled Breton and Lorraine blood, was born at Besançon. His father, Léopold Sigisbert Hugo, son of a cabinetmaker of Nancy, joined at the age of fourteen the army out of which the great Napoleon arose, and, himself an ardent republican, subsequently married the daughter of a royalist shipowner of Nantes. The poet, their third child, was an extremely feeble infant, only kept alive by the obstinate devotion of his mother, and passed his childhood amid scenes that followed the chances of his father's career. This circumstance took him to Corsica, Naples, and Spain, and provided the impressionable boy with a scenic background which coloured all the poetry which he afterward wrote. On an exercise-book in his fourteenth year he wrote, "I will be Chateaubriand or nothing," to the great scandal of his master—a claim, however, which was soon to be justified by Chateaubriand himself when he hailed the young poet as "enfant sublime." At twenty Victor Hugo published his first collection of verses, which won him a pension of a thousand francs from the newly restored monarchy and induced him to marry. His royalist mother was already dead, and his father, long estranged, had now remarried and was living at



Blois in high dudgeon at the turn of political events. Created Vicomte twenty years later, Hugo discovered a growing tendency toward the humanitarian and democratic view-points, pleaded for the abolition of the capital sentence, and demanded the removal of the ban against Napoleon's descendants, who, he claimed, would cease to be pretenders as soon as they might set foot as free men upon the soil of France. Thus thinking, he welcomed Louis Napoleon and supported his election as President, but turned to bitter hatred and invective on finding that his presidential vows were being flatly belied by pretensions to imperial power. Hence Hugo's long exile, first to Brussels and afterward to Jersey and Guernsey, where he produced the magnificent *Châtiments*, in which "Napoléon le Petit" is lashed without mercy and with unmatchable eloquence. He refused to return to France on the amnesty of 1857, retorting that he would return only when liberty herself was freed; but he came back on the outbreak of the Prussian war and the fall of Napoleon III.

So much has been cited of the external facts of Hugo's existence because his poetry was largely, as he said himself, a sonorous echo of its vicissitudes; and, in spite of his long exile, he was preoccupied almost as much with the Senate and the hustings as with the muse. No poet in France or elsewhere has ever had a more magnificent command of words than had Hugo. There is nothing in French poetry either before his time or after it which he has not equalled in point of musical invention and richness of sonority. Nor is there very much in the pictorial work of the Parnassians or the vaguer and more tremulous visions of the Symbolists which cannot be glimpsed in the vast mirror of his oceanic output. This fecundity, allied to a great hardihood of belief in his high mission, was the fatal danger to which Hugo succumbed. A French critic, when asked recently who was the greatest French poet, answered with conviction, if grudgingly: "Victor Hugo—unhappily!" The proviso implies a regret for the voluble and vague pomposity of which this great master of song (in every possible metre) was too often guilty. Conceiving himself as a trumpeter of the Almighty, he often fell into attitudes of comical arrogance. But it was he who overthrew the long bondage to Classical rules, and opened a wider window on to the horizons of history and the natural arenas in which the human drama is played out, while his wealth



of verbal music renders his work, when compared with that which it drove from the field, as an orchestra to a tin whistle.

49. ALFRED DE MUSSET (1810-57), born in Paris, died there worn out by all kinds of excess and embittered by the early exhaustion of his talent, which had depended only too fatally on the stimulation from bright eyes or full glasses which he persistently sought. A delayed success of his comedies upon the Parisian stage was a final consolation.

There are two Mussets, one sentimental and the other ironic. He began light-heartedly in the latter vein, but his adventure with George Sand—an episode which is too well known to need recapitulation—brought him that gift of tears for which he is most famous. The saying of Sully-Prudhomme, who was, in effect, the Musset of his own generation, can hardly be bettered :

Ton vague et triste livre  
Nous laisse pleins de vœux et de regrets confus ;  
Il donne des désirs sans donner de quoi vivre,  
Il mord l'âme et la chair : je ne l'ouvrirai plus.

There remain, however, the many who read poetry for delight or the consolation to be found in a shared grief, and for them, alike with the laughter of his early songs and the sobbing of his later *Nuits*, Musset retains the position of the spoilt darling which, in truth, he was. An example of the Romantic "maladie de soi," his sentimental adventures were the stuff of his poems, and his lyrical power waned and expired in exact degree as the passions and illusions of his youth fell from him. Later life showed him as a mere spectator of the human drama, bankrupt of all passion, but rallying with a jealous wit all those who were still active upon the stage. Too consciously understudying Byron, he succumbed, though less heroically than his idol, to the devastating logic of time.

Contrary to its title's suggestion, the poem *To a Dead Woman* belongs rather to the ironic de Musset, being addressed to the Princess Belgioso while she was still living but already tired of the poet as her lover. The opening lines refer to the celebrated figure of Night carved by Michelangelo for the tomb of Lorenzo de' Medici at Florence.

50. THÉOPHILE GAUTIER (1811-72) was born at Tarbes and intended to become a painter. His famous description of himself—"Je suis un homme pour qui le monde visible

existe"—is a confession, which the whole of his poetry confirms, that his experiences were of the eye rather than the heart. Both in this respect and in regard to the fineness of his versification he is the real father of the Parnassians, who almost regarded his well-known and often translated *Art* as a Holy Gospel on which to base their own practice. If his virtuosity was sometimes exercised on too slight themes, he did French poetry a service by insisting on fine workmanship in a period when it was generally lax, and by shaping clear images when his contemporaries were inclining to the vague. And he has, in spite of his greater lack, a suggestion of that noble grotesque which Baudelaire was later, in Hugo's phrase, to flash upon the heaven of art as a "rayon macabre."

The fall of the Empire after the disasters of 1870 involved the complete overthrow of his fortune, and he died soon afterward without having won any adequate material reward or proper distinction for the work he had achieved as poet or critic.

**51-55.** TO LECONTE DE LISLE (1818-94) de Musset was to the last "ce gamin," and against the personal element in poetry and the histrionic element in the poet which it involves he rose in indignant protest. The Romantic school according to him "rises in self-disturbance and wastes away." His artistic creed had for aim to maintain unspoiled the probity of the individual soul amid the onrush of delusive sensation. Never from him need have come the ashamed confession of Shakespeare that he had

Gor'd mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear.

Born amid the Indian Ocean, on the remote island of Réunion (whence the addition to his name of *de l'isle* to distinguish him from other Lecontes), his mind became saturated with his early impressions of tropical splendour and of the relentless and inhuman natural powers which so nakedly unfold under the ardour of a tropical sun. Illusion he knows is there, but not less does he find it in the life of the more temperate West, where the apparent tameness of civilized man is but a cloak for tastes not less callous, if less candid, than those of the jungle beast or the illiterate black. The sound of the world's applause would hurt and not solace his pride and self-pity; and it is not surprising to learn that the world withheld it for

a long time, many nonentities having preceded him in election to the Academy.

This attitude to life and to his art, though primarily an æsthetic one, implies and is indeed founded on a moral feeling. The attempt to see things as in themselves they really are, to set them down with scrupulous exactitude in conformity with the severest of metrical forms and without the prevarication of personal sentiment, implies a stern self-discipline in the poet both as a spectator of life and as its describer. It is, however, precisely because the man is greater than his theory that his exactitude in word-painting and his marmorean perfection of form can never wholly shut in the live body of intense feeling that still pulses beneath them and refuses burial. The style is indeed the man if we are to believe the description of him given by Catulle Mendès—"quelque chose comme un volcan couvert de glace."

Rejecting religion and embracing science, Leconte de Lisle sees man faring down an everlasting road where the rest of animate creation are his equal fellows, all alike obedient to a mandate never understood and only released from their sufferings in the Nirvana of death.

**56-61.** CHARLES BAUDELAIRE (1821-67) was born in Paris, his father being sixty-two and his mother twenty-seven. If his stamina suffered from the age of his begetter, it is certain that his outlook was darkened and his mind thwarted in its earliest unfolding by the remarriage of his widowed mother when he was only six years of age, the immediate consequence being a disconsolate childhood spent in the forbiddingly monastic atmosphere of successive boarding-schools. His stepfather, General Aupic, was a man of social ambition and used to authority; but his schemes for the boy's advancement were obstinately opposed, and, refusing to accept any condition for his future that was proposed for him, Baudelaire was finally placed on a vessel bound for the East, given a small sum of money, and, being then in his twenty-first year, was expected to return home duly chastened. The result was, indeed, the exact contrary. He was back within a year without having reached Calcutta or shown any of that interest in trade which the trip had been designed to foster, being still obstinately determined to do nothing at all save dabble in the literary work on which all his ambition was centred.

Attainment of his majority and succession to his patrimony now gave him his chance. The only thing which he brought back with him was a constant grief and expense in the presence of a black mistress, herself inconstant. With her he had brought an unquenchable memory of a bright clime, a lavish nature, and a gorgeous sloth, which filled many of his poems and provided his mind with a continual haven from its curious craze for probing into the foul and the loathsome and analysing its own reactions thereto. Paradise glimpsed through the exaltation of the senses however viciously attained, the glory of the tropics recalled by one whose return to them is forbidden, corruption stealing after the footsteps of pleasure—these are the recurring themes of Baudelaire's poetry. He was in Namur Cathedral when a stroke fell on him, and he died, a witless paralytic, within a year.

Baudelaire's influence has been enormous and was probably at its height about thirty years after his death. This posthumous success, though it has admittedly an element of *scandale*, as has that of Verlaine, could only have been made fertile by the real elements of originality and sincerity which his work contained, and to these every contemporary critic of eminence remained most resolutely blind. The opinion of Faguet that he is "le poète aride de la banalité" and that "Les violences verbales, les brutalités et les ordures dissimulent mal l'indigence de la pensée et la pauvreté du style" is in full consonance with the rest of the influential pundits of his time, who would have laughed at the idea of considering him their peer. Something in Baudelaire's own attitude had, no doubt, to do with this lively expression of scorn which he provoked as an answer to his own. A man who spits at the *bourgeoisie* must not be surprised if in turn his company is shunned and his eloquence belittled. What was less obvious then, but is now becoming more clear, is that Baudelaire was profoundly sincere, and if like Hamlet he sometimes "put an antic disposition on," he wore it only as a mask to his more tragic feelings. It has been well said of him that "Only a believer can blaspheme," and the conception of himself as a "mauvais moine" haunted by the heaven that he should enter, but barred therefrom by duties that he is too weak to perform and a discipline to which the pride of his flesh will not surrender, recurs throughout his work and is one of its most revealing elements. "Baudelaire," says M. Paul Claudel, "a

chanté la seule passion que le xix<sup>e</sup> siècle pût éprouver avec sincérité : le remords.”

**62.** THÉODORE DE BANVILLE (1823-91) was born at Moulins, the son of a master-mariner. Hardly had he finished his schooling in Paris when he published at the age of nineteen his first book of verses. He was already, as he always rejoiced to be, a complete master of the art of riming, on which he wrote a *Petit Traité* that still remains a most useful and a most amusing guide. He is, however, an example of how far supreme skill, combined with a delicate artistic conscience, will carry one who has neither passionate feelings nor profound ideas to express. His enjoyment of metrical difficulties led him to revive the *ballade* and other repetitive forms which had not been practised in French poetry since the days of Villon.

**63-64.** SULLY-PRUDHOMME (1839-1907) was born at Paris, took a science degree at nineteen, and entered the great engineering workshops of Creusot forthwith. Only a few months, however, was sufficient to prove his dislike for the position, and he returned to Paris and started reading for the law, which, in turn, he abandoned for the pursuit of letters. His first volume, published in 1865, was much helped by a favourable notice from Sainte-Beuve. He soon became identified with the Parnassians, but the kinship was one of technique alone, for while he shared their devotion to form he preferred the analysis of his own sensibilities and mental conflicts and did not follow them in their treatment of exotic themes. The conflict between faith and doubt has never been more touchingly set forth than in the work of his middle period. He was a sincere thinker and a sincere artist, whose austerity led him at last away from poetry to seek for the meaning of life and its moral purpose in philosophical dissertations.

**64.** The Danaïdes were the fifty daughters of Danaus, all of whom save one were condemned to expiate the murder of their husbands by filling a huge vessel which was full of holes. Their labour was therefore infinite and their punishment eternal.

**65-66.** STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ (1842-98), born in Paris and engaged for the greater part of his life as a teacher of English in State schools, became a living oracle to the younger literary men at the close of the last century. An apostle of the perfect





form, sequence of sense he regarded as unnecessary so long as his words sounded beautiful and were sufficient to suggest a mood or a dream. His vogue developed, as such fashions will, into a form of snobbery in which obscurity became a virtue and to be understood a sign of vulgarity. The early *Après-midi d'un Faune* is of limpid clearness when compared with his later work, in which not merely sense but syntax is entirely to seek, though the sound and the suggestion of his lines are of disturbing magnificence.

66. This is a fragment from the celebrated *Après-midi*, of which a miraculous rendering has been completed by Mr Aldous Huxley. Mallarmé's lines are so variously construed in the effort to achieve their sense that I can only hope that I have discovered a melodic coherence in them, that being, I believe, all that Mallarmé sought.

67-74. JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA (1842-1905) was the most expert pupil of Leconte de Lisle, and even bettered his master's work as regards exactitude of visual word-painting to the exclusion of personal emotion. It is a paradox that he should be a lesser poet than his master, not because, following his *credo*, he controlled his feelings less perfectly, but because he had less powerful feelings to control. He too was born in the tropics (Cuba), being the son of a Spaniard who claimed direct descent from one of the founders or "Conquistadores" of the New World. His French mother secured him a French upbringing and added thereby to the glories of the French tongue. His life-work (*Les Trophées*) consisted of 118 sonnets, in which he gave a graphic summary of historic incidents chosen from the most grandiose records of mankind, setting his figures of pomp and triumph into occasional relief with the humbler pastoral elements of human life over which they strode to victory.

It is a suggestive fact that the two completest Parnassians were both Creoles. Their native heat and light very certainly had an effect on their outlook whether of the eye or of the mind.

69. "This damsel, after the solemn betrothal, was deserted by her affianced husband. She then, as I quote from Suidas's Lexicon, translating the passage, 'beseeches the Cabiri to avenge her, and follow up [*i.e.*, to pursue to destruction] the perjurer'" (Dr Jacob Cooper). For the shaking of robes

as a curse see Nehemiah v, 13. I am indebted for this explanation to the complete rendering of Hérédia made by Mr Edward Robeson Taylor, of San Francisco.

**72.** The medals here mentioned, of the tyrannous Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini (1417-68), and of his wife Isotta degli Atti, both by Matteo de' Pasti, may be seen in the British Museum.

**75-78.** PAUL VERLAINE (1844-96) was born in Metz. His father, an Ardennais by birth, but an army captain, was then resident there as a follower of the regimental circuits, dying just as the poet attained his majority. His mother was doting and indulgent, and Verlaine was soon involved in drunken habits which were his undoing, leading first to rupture with his young wife, and, after his patrimony was spent, to a miserably indigent career which fluctuated between prisons, hospitals, and sordid traffic with a seamy underworld.

Verlaine began as a Parnassian, but developed into the most personal of all French poets, lisping out like a weeping child the whole tale of his naughtiness and repentance. His conversion happened while he was a prisoner in the county gaol at Mons during a term imposed on him for the attempted murder of a vicious crony in the person of Arthur Rimbaud (see p. 268). Like the Impressionists in painting, he set the fashion for rendering things not as we know they are, but as they seem to be through fluctuations of a light which may be of the outward sky or of the inner soul. He carried the ingenuous and lax line to its extreme limit, but never practised the freedom of scansion nor of sense that his followers have claimed, all being subtly controlled.

**80-82.** JEAN RICHEPIN, born in Algeria in 1849, was the son of an army doctor, and after brilliant studies at the École Normale Supérieure spent the best years of his young manhood among the Ishmaels of the road, whose tenderness and blasphemy is all set down in his *Chanson des Gueux*, along with the cunning shifts with which they fence against the pricks of famine. Extenuating nothing of the vileness that thrives under necessity's sharp spur, he shocked overnice literary people by his indulgence in the slang of an underworld akin to that in which Villon had moved five hundred years before him. His book was condemned as immoral, and its author was imprisoned; but he hailed the condemnation as an

acknowledgment of society's own guilt, the vileness of his unhushed speech being the measure of its neglect of "these adventurers, these hardy fellows, these revolted children, to whom she has almost always been a hard foster-mother, and who, finding no milk in the breast of the unkindly nurse, bite into her very flesh to allay their hunger."

Iconoclast in fibre, somewhat too prone to idolize the *barbare* in life, as though the spirit of the Arab land in which he was born had woven her strong spells over his coming, he has breathed that reality of experience into poetry without which it tends to become no more than a formal toy for tired minds.

**83.** ARTHUR RIMBAUD (1851-91) was born at Charleville in the Ardennes, ran away from home, and, living on the bounty of successive literary hosts at Paris, finally fastened himself on the irresponsible Verlaine. After his final quarrel with the latter, the necessities of breadwinning turned his violence from letters into action, and he became in turn soldier in the Dutch army, member of a travelling circus, trafficker in ivory and gold, and finally adviser, with the cognizance of the French Colonial Office, of the Emperor Menelik. A fall from his horse caused a tumour on the knee, which brought him home for treatment and subsequent amputation of the limb, and he died at Marseilles just as he was about to set sail on a new mission.

In *Voyelles* the *Ses* of the last line illustrates the disadvantages of having possessive pronouns which, like the French, agree with the thing possessed and not, like the English, with the person who possesses. Some translators render the word by 'her,' but whatever sense can be found in the sonnet seems to demand this *crescendo* and conclusion in the dazzle of Omnipotence.

**84.** GEORGES RODENBACH (1855-98) was born at Tournai, not far from the French frontier, and passed his early years at Ghent. He was for some years a practising barrister, but later settled in Paris. A disciple of Baudelaire, he is unlike him in refusing to give a hard scrutiny to life, being very willing to look with half-shut lids if so doing will render drab things beautiful and put a rosy light upon the hollow cheeks of human squalor. And where Baudelaire seeks a heaven through the exaltation of the senses, Rodenbach more





meekly begs for a refuge that is beyond the striving of the flesh—a refuge where he may be weaned away from all desire for fulfilment into a trance that is yet induced by the hypnotic suggestions of the senses whose dominion he would evade.

**87-89.** For a more direct echo of Baudelaire's Parnassian manner and his wild nostalgia for the sumptuary splendour of tropic indolence we must go from Rodenbach to the Lillois ALBERT SAMAIN (1858-1900), whose weaning from the exotic manner is shadowed in the poem (No. 89) on his native city, where while still in his teens he began to work for the support of his widowed mother and a younger brother and sister. His cry was doubtless the cry of an unhealthy body that was starved of the sun, and his poems are obviously those of a *poitrinaire*. No poet has given such perfect illustration to Amiel's axiom that a landscape is an "état d'âme."

**93-96.** HENRI DE RÉGNIER, born in 1864, who once paid to the Parnassians the sincerest form of flattery, and added to Hérédia the further compliment of marrying his daughter, was afterward the first experimenter in that irregular form of ode which English readers associate with the name of Coventry Patmore. He has successfully flirted with assonance, and flattered in turn the idolaters of Verlaine and of Mallarmé; in every mode he has maintained a golden mean, made the classic world seem modern and familiar, and proved his mastery. But all this virtuosity is a screen for a poet who can be, on occasion, as personal and poignant as Sully-Prudhomme or Verlaine himself.

**100.** PAUL FORT was born in Reims in 1872, and began at eighteen to conduct a Théâtre d'Art at Paris which lived up to its name by producing ambitious but unremunerative pieces by native poets and by foreigners. Five years later he began the publication of the *Ballades Françaises* (not complying with the accepted *ballade* form), which have continued almost to date, and by which he is so well known. M. Fort prints his nearly regular stanzas as prose paragraphs.

In the penultimate stanza of the English rendering of *Le Lien d'Amour* 'men,' 'sin,' and 'line,' 'time,' are purposely coupled in imitation of the half-rimes which the original here shows, giving it some of the casual effect of folk-song.



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